Mr. Pickett of Detroit

Theophil Stanger

Mr. Pickett of Detroit

BY THEOPHIL STANGER

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Chapter I.

A STORM IN A CITY.

The eight-thirty P. M. interurban from Ann Arbor halted at the Detroit terminal amid a torrent of rain and a fifty-mile-an-hour gale. Its arrival resembled the landing of an excursion steamer in foul weather. Up from the river, along the narrow canyon of Griswold Street, and into the teeth of the passenger coach roared the terrific storm, tugging at her as though it would release her brakes, while the unusual downpour flooded the street from curb to curb.

As the passengers dashed from the car through the swirl of the shallow flood, a stalwart, middle-aged man, clad in rubber from head to foot, approached the platform and extended his hands to a tall girl just stepping out.

"Into my surf-boat, Vera! There's no gang plank!" he called, picked her up with one strong arm and with the other took her suitcase.

"Hello, daddy," cried the girl, with a hearty laugh, "the Armstrong ferry, ho!— Doesn't this remind you of our Rocky Mountain freshets?"

"Beats them all," said the man, the same jolly mood in his deep voice, as he deposited his burden on the walk and they hastened through the splashing, dodging crowd

of humanity, into the waiting room.

"Into these," he said, picking up the waterproof garments he had in readiness, "and a sprint for home!"

A few minutes later father and daughter were seated in their motor car at the Larned Street curb.

"Just your kind of a night, father," exclaimed the young lady enthusiastically from under the covers. "A regular typhoon!"

"Five *knots* an hour, the speed limit!" he laughed.

The storm had struck the city very suddenly and caught the populace unawares. As the two turned up Woodward Avenue, the main thoroughfare and old Campus Martius presented a scene of great confusion. Pedestrians, with no protection but their common street clothes, were darting from the shelter of shop entrances into the already over-crowded street cars, each receiving a complete drenching during the dash. Automobiles of all descriptions were hugging each other's heels, their drivers, exposed more or less to the tempest, impatient of the rules of the road, taking every advantage to forge ahead and make time on their way home. The traffic officers at the crossings had the task of their lives.

"What a stampede!" exclaimed the girl, as they took their position in the unsteady line. "Were they weather prophets as you, they would have come prepared, or stayed at home."

"The very cause of much of the trouble in our cities, Vera: the people do not look beyond the cornices of their buildings, out into the skies.—— There!"

As he spoke, the entire brilliant scene of the great square, surmounted by the monstrous electric signs on the

surrounding buildings, was suddenly, by some disturbance in the current, thrown into complete darkness, lit up only at intervals by flashes of lightning along the deluged sky. For an instant the noise of moving cars ceased, and the rolling of the thunder above was the only loud sound audible. Then the lights returned and all was bustle and commotion again.

"That for a monitor to look skyward!" remarked the girl.

As they proceeded up the avenue, the traffic became gradually lighter, but the storm increased in fury. The father guided his car with unerring movements, and his sharp eye and steady nerve prevented many a collision with reckless drivers, blinded by the dashing rain.

The noise of the gale, as it raged among the buildings and trees, grew into a veritable din. Awnings boomed and pounded or were torn from end to end; swinging, shrieking signs along the way were dashed to the ground, among the passing pedestrians; a monstrous plate glass window gave way before the pressure of the wind and went crashing into the showcase within; a piece of roofing from a building in process of construction was torn away and came sweeping down upon the two in the motor car. The father sprang up from his seat, and, with one hand on his wheel, diverted the course of the heavy sheet of metal, with a stroke of his powerful gloved fist, from the canopy and the head of the girl, and it dropped harmlessly upon the lawn extension across the street.

So much there was to occupy their attention, that but few words passed between father and daughter. One fact was very evident from the demeanor of the girl:

that she had perfect confidence in her father, also that she was thoroughly enjoying the excitement.

Soon they turned west from the avenue, then north again, on a narrower street, the watchful driver peering from side to side through the unabating deluge of rain and driving his machine at moderate speed.

Suddenly, at a crossing, where the view to the right was obstructed by a tall hedge, a motor car dashed from that direction at full speed, immediately into the path of the two. The glare of an arc light and the pyrotechnics in the skies had obscured the rays of the defective lamps. In a flash the father turned his wheel, and his machine veered to the left and down the cross street. The other driver also saw the danger, but veered too far to the right, and, with no time to slow down, dashed sidelong into an iron post at the curbing. His machine turning turtle, he was hurled to the pavement.

"There, there, a criminally reckless driver!—— But that man is badly hurt!" exclaimed the father, as he stopped his car, and he and the girl leaped out to the aid of the stranger. He drew his flash-light from his pocket and turned it upon the prostrate man, lying unconscious and pale, bleeding from his nose and mouth.

At this moment the girl noticed the lamp in her father's hand tremble, and, looking up, saw, by the dim reflection from the light, his features grow ghastly pale and harden into a strange expression of aversion and alarm. For a second the strong man staggered.

"What is it, father?" she exclaimed in fright.

"Nothing at all, Vera." He was perfectly calm again, and was feeling the man's pulse and heart.

"I must carry him in here."

He picked up the injured man and carried him to the door of the nearest house. The girl rang the door-bell, and a kindly woman opened.

"An automobile accident! May I lay this man on your couch and call for an ambulance?"

The woman showed him to the 'phone, and while he spoke to the hospital, she and the girl, who obviously had been trained in the work, administered first aid to the stricken stranger.——The ambulance would be there in five minutes.

The stranger was responding to the efforts of the women and beginning to bre the. As he opened his eyes, the father, who had been bending over him for a moment with a searching gaze, suddenly turned away and strode rapidly toward the door.

He is doing well, madam," he said, "but there may be others out there. Will you stay with him?——Come, child, we'll see," and the girl followed him out into the stormy night.

For a moment he flashed his light over the wrecked car at the roadside, then, with a sharp, determined turn, he led the way to his own vehicle.

"Where are you going, father?" inquired the girl in surprise.

"Come, get in!" he demanded, in a tone of voice entirely new to her.

"But we cannot leave him in this way!" remonstrated the girl.

"The ambulance will be here in a minute, and we can be of no more help.——Nonsense!——Get in—please!"

It was a command.

He half lifted her into the car and continued on the west road slowly, until, glancing back, they both saw the lights of the ambulance halting at the house. Then he turned to the north and increased his speed.

For several minutes the daughter sat in silence. This was an act so new to her, so apparently unworthy of her father, that for a time she was dumbfounded. Then she ventured, rather timidly: "Why have we done this?"

"Ask me no questions tonight, child," he said in that same strange tone.

Another surprise to her.—— From her childhood she had never asked him a question in vain.

She sat and mused again, and amid the raging of the elements and the plunging of the car (for the first time in her memory he was defying the speed ordinance) she asked herself repeatedly: "Why has he done this?" and: "Who is this stranger?"

Before she had time for conclusions, they turned into the cement driveway that led to their home. As they halted at the veranda, the door was thrown open, and an old colored woman, turning on the porch lights, exclaimed:

"Wall, Mr. Pickett, has yo' all fotch home Miss Vera in all dis hya combustion? Hit sho' am rainin' nigga babies tonight!——Bless yo' soul, honey, but yo' daddy allers was a powful handy cyclone loop-de-looper. He nebba satified, 'septin' de wind howlin' or sometin' kickin' up some filibusterin' shindimadoodle nohow."

She was hugging and caressing the young lady and

helping her out of her wet wraps, while both Mr. Pickett and Vera laughed heartily at this oration of welcome.

"Never had a finer drive, Betsy!" said the man, all his good nature and equanimity seeming to have returned.

"What de twouble, Vera, honey? Yo' is all pale and noivous like," said the old housekeeper, as her young mistress stood before her in traveling dress.

"Nothing but that I need rest and some of your good cooking, Mammy Betsy."

They were soon partaking of the hot tea and muffins prepared by the old woman and were chatting as merrily as ever.

When, later in the evening, the father returned from his garage to the house, he met his daughter in the hallway.

"Vera, you must not mention this accident to anyone, ——but I suppose I owe you an explanation?" he said, very gravely.

"I wish you might tell me, father."

"I may, some day, but if I never do, you will trust that your father is not the craven sneak he appeared tonight—will you?"

She looked at him with a puzzled, troubled look and noticed an expression of painful solicitude in his features, as she had seen it there on several occasions before, when she had been ill or in some danger.

"I shall always know you could not be that!" she said, as she kissed him.

"Goodnight, Vera!"

Chapter II.

AT ALGONAC.

Armin Pickett, born and brought up in Lexington, Kentucky, had, before his thirtieth year, settled on a homestead in Montana. There he had married an accomplished young school teacher from the East and had prospered. His wife, dying during an epidemic, had left him with a pretty daughter of ten. A faithful negro servant, whom Mr. Pickett had, in fond preference for the customs of the South, engaged some years previous, had, at the death of her mistress, taken upon herself the responsibilities of the household and the traditional mammy's share in the bringing up of the child.

As a man of ample means, Mr. Pickett had found some leisure to devote himself to the training of the girl and had brought her up in all the wholesome out-and-indoor accomplishments of well-bred western girls, including, as he expressed it, "the three H's": hunting, horsemanship, and housekeeping, (the latter in co-operation with Mammy Betsy), and had seen her grow up the image of her mother and the favorite of the home community.

Three years before the incident opening this narrative, he had built himself a residence in Detroit, in order to be near his daughter while she attended the university at Ann Arbor, and had opened a real estate office in the city. ——Having studied architecture in his youth, he lately also devoted some of his time to that pursuit. "An avo-

cation: a lifeboat in case of shipwreck," he was wont to say.——The handsome bungalow he lived in was of his own design.

His real estate business had, in the short period, grown immensely. As he had become possessor of large tracts of land and valuable mining interests in the West, so he continued to prosper at Detroit. He had come to the city during the great automobile boom, had bought land wisely and shrewdly and was now holding and selling lots in many sections at an enormous increase in valuation.

However, on opening his office, he had permitted himself the expensive luxury of taking into his business, as silent partners—a hobby or two, and those of a kind that soon earned for him such diverse epithets as: philanthropist, crank, meddler with legitimate business, and shrewd advertiser. While holding his lots on upper Woodward, adjoining courts, and boulevards at top prices, he had, for instance, laid out a block of cottages in the factory districts of the West Side and sold the lots and cottages at cost to a miniature colony of foreigners whom he had selected deliberately from among hundreds of applicants. They were: a Russian, Servian, Hungarian, Swede, Dane, German, Frenchman, Englishman, Scotchman, Irishman, Hollander, Spaniard, Italian, and a Greek.

He had, in his mind, named the settlement the "Little Hague," and had designed the cottages himself, avoiding the hideous uniformity of the usual rows of shacks in factory districts, building each one in the middle class cottage style prevailing in the native land of the prospective occupant, leaving room for small gardens, and furnishing each

cottage with decent conveniences. The effect of the whole was extremely picturesque.——At one corner of the square he built a spacious two-story building, containing several apartments on the first floor and a large hall on the second.

The purpose of this little settlement had been the theme of some speculation among his acquaintances.—— To one inquisitive fellow he had remarked, in his jovial way: "Why it's but a Punch and Judy show. Watch the devil get the worst of it out there!" To another he elucidated: "I am the up-to-date Rinaldo Rinaldini, the robber and philanthropist; I rob up-town and restore at this settlement. Watch my little experiment and you may read a chapter of romance."

As to the colonies he was settling on some of his western lands—that was still another story.

Vera had now spent three years at the University. She had selected her course in consultation with her father, choosing the natural sciences, *modern* languages, literature and music. She had proved an apt, even a brilliant student, and had made especially rapid strides, under private tutors, in music, being endowed with great love and talent for it and possessing a rare charm in its performance.

She had just returned for her third vacation on the stormy evening described above.

After retiring that night, in spite of her wish to dismiss the particulars of the automobile accident from her mind, it had given her much to think about. Her memory sped back to their mountain home in Montana. She happened to recall an incident of her father's res-

cuing, at peril of his own life, from a mountain torrent, a desperate cattle thief, who had stolen of his stock and threatened his life.——It was but one of many such deeds characteristic of him. Meanness and cowardice on his part were unthinkable to her; therefore his strange desertion of the victim of the accident seemed inexplicable.

Truly it was the stranger who was responsible for the trouble, also her father had seen to it that the injured man was taken care of, but why this skulking away to avoid being identified with the event?

When she awoke next morning and came to the breakfast table, he had already left for his office down-town. On the window-seat lay the morning paper. She picked it up and read on the first page, under a prominent heading: "Samuel Blake, representing the C. & L. Land Co. of Denver, met with a serious accident during the storm last evening. A speeding automobile struck his own car at a crossing, dashing him out upon the pavement. The reckless driver, leaving the unconscious victim behind, speedily made his escape. He is said to have had a young lady with him. The culprit has not yet been apprehended by the police. Mr. Blake lies at Harper Hospital in a serious condition."

She tore the paper in two in disgust at the perversion. *"Samuel Blake of Denver!"*

On the table lay a note from her father: "Be ready at ten.——A week's outing at Algonac and in the hills."

Vera hastened to eat her breakfast and dress for the trip.——Mammy Betsy was all hilarity. "Bless yo' heart, honey, but you all is sho' lookin' purty dis mawnin'. Yo' daddy say he goin' t' take you fo' fresh ai' an' scenery t'

begin yo' vacation, an' away from de musicianers what's sho' to come after you, soon's you blows inter town."

When Mr. Pickett returned in his car, Vera had the fishing tackle, rifles, botanical case, and field glasses, in readiness.

While Mammy Betsy was getting provisions from the kitchen, Mr. Pickett remarked with apparent levity: "I have word from the hospital that the man is out of danger. I have sent money.——The newspapers misstated——"

"Slandered!" she interrupted.

"At their pleasure. This is to be a recreation trip for you, a look toward Montana, since we cannot go out there, so we'll forget the incident."

"Certainly, Daddy! Hurrah for camp!" she said with glad abandon.——Betsy came out with the supplies, and they were off.

They presented a handsome sight as they motored along a shady cross-town avenue in their limousine, Mr. Pickett at the wheel, a man of almost Grecian type; tall, dark-haired, strong-featured and of ruddy complexion; Vera, beside Betsy, with features also cast in classical mould, and with an extremely delicate *teint* and soft blond hair, her beautiful, wide blue eyes steady and intelligent, but still full of the wonderment of childhood. An interesting contrast she presented to the swarthy mammy beside her. "A lily 'longside a blackberry," said Betsy.

The air on that morning, unburdened of its heat and humidity by the noctural storm, was deliciously cool and balmy. As they passed out into the country and through strips of woodland, the fragrance of the first bloom of

elder and linden was on the breeze, while sweet-brier, orchid and iris peered out at the tourists from eyes brightned by yesterday's rigorous bath.

Vera forgot every impression of the night before, and nothing escaped her keen observation.——This was playday. Betsy had a comical talent for imitating the wren, cat-bird, song sparrow, and meadow lark. At noon she and Vera spread the lunch under a large elm in a grove, and late in the afternoon they reached Mr. Pickett's cottage at Algonac.

Now for a week of rest and recreation.

However,—supper was barely over and plans being laid for tomorrow's fishing trip, when stealthy footsteps were heard about the cottage.

Vera found it unusual that her father's hand went out automatically to the rifle leaning against the fireplace. His face was pale.——He had never betrayed such nervousness before.

Then came a blast of tin horns and a ringing of cowbells, and in upon the three, helter-skelter, burst a party of young ladies and gentlemen, with flushed, insolently happy faces, and in road tourists' attire, shouting:

"Hurrah!—Here they are! Found—found!"

Then another deafening din from horns and cowbells.

"Told you they were here!—Won my bet!" shouted one young man; and another, tall and handsome, stepped up to Vera, extended his hand, and said suavely:

"You are our prisoner, Miss Pickett! The first rehearsal is tomorrow!"

"They shoot men out West for lesser offenses than this, Mr. Calvert," spoke up Mr. Pickett, approaching and

grasping the young man's hand warmly. "We are out for a rest. No rehearsals for a week to come!"

"Then we'll compromise it. Say next Monday. How about it, Miss Vera? We'll take no refusal. Big concert at the club Saturday a week. Simply impossible without you. Miss Pomeroy, our soprano, has suddenly left for Europe. You're it!"

Another big blast and pandemonium.

Mammy Betsy, who had been stopping her ears, now grabbed a broomstick.

"Sit down, ye scallawags, and behabe yoselves, ebbrybody," she commanded.

All scrambled for chairs and benches.

"Shall we capitulate to this mob?" said Mr. Pickett.

"You are very kind, Mr. Calvert, but——"

Vera was politely interrupted by another deafening outburst.

"Disarm, ye rebels! Don' ye go wakin' up no dead ones aroun' heah!" commanded Betsy. She soon had possession of the horns and bells, which she deposited in a row on the mantle.

"Well, if you're in trouble, I'm glad to help you out, Mr. Calvert," said Vera.

"Hurrah!"—Someone started to whistle the "Kirmess" from "Faust" and they began waltzing around the room, one of the young ladies confiscating Mr. Pickett, who proved a very graceful dancing partner.

"May I have the honor?" said Mr. Calvert, as he offered his arm to Vera and led her out to the veranda, all the others following.

There stood a piano the party had ordered placed

while they were creating the disturbance indoors, and a young lady seated before it started the accompaniment to the famous "Lucia" sextette. Mr. Calvert took his violin from the rustic table, and six voices out of the party, taking up their respective parts,—Vera that of Lucia—, sang a travesty on the text that would have given the librettist a nightmare.

Then arose Phil Beffel, big basso comedian with megaphonic voice and bellowed "Gypsy John," and all "dipped their fingers in the stew" in the refrain.

In this manner the program went on, and at the end, with fine intelligence and sweet individual charm, Vera sang French and German ditties and Scotch and Irish ballads, to the "humming chorus" of the assembly.

Some Indians of Walpole Island had gathered on the lawn. "What do they understand of all this?" someone remarked. "Every note of it! Music is a universal language that needs no interpreter," spoke up Mr. Pickett. ——He was quietly seated in an armchair and occasionally joined in the chorus with his resonant baritone.

"Reserve a seat for me at the concert," he finally remarked, dryly. "Perhaps I'll live through it."

When the young folks left that night for the hotel and cottages about town, declaring they were camping on the trail of their victims, to prevent escape by land or sea, the program for the coming concert, with Vera in the leading part, was agreed upon.

Mr. Calvert was in high spirits during the following day. He was constantly in Vera's company, playing the gallant aboard ship through The Flats and in a romp through the woods. He was very interesting to her, be-

cause of his comprehensive knowledge of all things musical, yet beyond that their interests often diverged. He had been her teacher during her vacations at Detroit, she his best gifted pupil. To him she was ever a beautiful, fascinating marvel from the wild, romantic West.

An incident occurred that afternoon that disturbed his mood.——The party was enjoying a ride through the coves of Walpole Island in Mr. Pickett's launch. Vera, discovering an early pond lily in a narrow inlet, asked her father to get it.

"To be sure." Mr. Pickett halted the boat at fifteen yards from the lily and picked up his rifle. All eyes were on him.

"Three shots, to allow for the ripple and curvature of the stem. The stem will measure from the tip of my finger to my elbow," he said with a twinkle in his eye.

There were three reports in rapid succession and three splashes in a short, horizontal line on the near side of the lily. At the second report, the flower nodded slightly.

"Hurrah! You've cut it. It's floating!" all cried.

They approached the floating flower. Someone picked it up. From calyx to clipped end it measured as Mr. Pickett had promised!

"The dickens!" yelped Phil Beffel. "Who on earth could beat it?"

"There's only one who might equal it: Dr. Glenn Terry, of Detroit, graduate of the University at Ann Arbor, formerly of Denver, Colorado!" recited Vera, and looked curiously toward her father, evidently for a protest. It was well that his face was averted, as he was busy with his engine, or she might have seen there the

same expression of alarm she had noted when he looked upon the features of Sam Blake.

"The young man you met on your visit to the clinic at Ann Arbor?" inquired Ethel Culver, the contralto.

"Identically," said Vera. "A week ago, for the first time. See paragraphs first and last of my letter!"

"A cow puncher from Colorado?" laughed Mr. Calvert.

"A more splendid young man you never met!" was her enthusiastic retort.

Mr. Calvert made an apology, and there was much banter, the rest entering the lists, Phil Beffel at the head.

"What record has he smashed?" finally asked Mr. Pickett.

"All the records at the Ann Arbor rifle range," said Vera.

"Well, I'm from Missouri!"——Mr. Pickett appeared jolly and game as ever, as he spoke.

"I've invited him to the house," continued Vera.

"He is welcome, and he shall show me," said Mr. Pickett, simply.

On the evening of the second day in camp all were assembled at the cottage again. Betsy had served a fish dinner, for casting had been good. The men were smoking, the girls reading, stitching and gossiping. Phil Beffel, the basso, was reading the Detroit paper and fighting a mosquito.

"Did you hear of the trouble down at your settlement?" he said to Mr. Pickett, looking up from his paper.

"No,—what's the matter?"

"Berthold Stark, your young chemist, was badly hurt by an explosion at the chemical works last night. 'Not expected to live,' says the paper."

"Berthold!" exclaimed Vera, looking over to her father in alarm.

"Does it say what physician he has?" asked Mr. Pickett.

"'Dr. Glenn Terry'", read Phil. "Ho! Ho! Buffalo Bill!"

Vera stepped up and deliberately pulled the big fellow's ears.

"Father, we must run down and look after the boy at once!" she cried, earnestly.

"I give it up! No camping for us this summer unless we escape to Montana," he said. "I'll call up the doctor," and he began hastily to pack up some fishing tackle.

"So they got that coward, did they!" grunted Beffel, and contined to read: "'Mr. George Carter was arrested today, as the man who ran down Mr. Sam Blake of Denver last night.'——Well, I hope he gets what's coming to him! These speeders are getting too gay!"

Vera met the disturbed look in her father's face as he laid away the tackle and left the room.

And so, although they had all planned to make a trip over the hills to Lake Orion, the next morning found the entire party in their machines, heading back for Detroit. Vera and Ethel Culver were in Mr. Calvert's car.

"I suspect you think more of your little colony on the West Side than you do of all of us!" mocked Mr. Calvert, when the case of Berthold Stark was mentioned.

"You must come down there some time. It's one of

the most interesting spots in Detroit," said the girl.

Mr. Pickett followed in his own car, with Betsy. His face would light up when he glanced at the young people in the car ahead, for he was fond of young Calvert and ever pleased to see Vera in his company. But his mind was now struggling with a difficult problem, and strange events crowded his memory, as he repeated to himself:

"Dr. Glenn Terry of Denver!—Now in Detroit!"

*** On the evening of that day, the Captain of Police received the following anonymous note:

"Sir:—I am the man who 'collided' (as the newspaper has it) with Samuel Blake, Wednesday night. Accident entirely due to his carelessness. You are informed that I have sent money to the hospital. There are reasons for my not reporting in person. I advise you to release the man wrongly held responsible."

The man, George Carter, easily proved an alibi the same evening and was released.

Chapter III.

AN ODD COLONY.

Dr. Glenn Terry stepped from the sick room out upon the porch of the little dwelling on C Street, Detroit. On the neatly kept lawn before him appeared beds of pansies, peonies, and other blossoms of the season. He looked

down along the picturesque, varied fronts of the entire row of cottages in the block, all kept as neat as this one, yet each of individual design.

Out on the curbing sat half a dozen youngsters of various types and complexions, their ages ranging from about six to ten.

"Vat you sposen, kids, is dee goodest ting to eat on top dee vorld?" he heard one little blond fellow ask, as gravely as though discussing some ponderous cosmic problem with a brother sage.

"Da spaghett' an' da banan,'" said the little materialist philosopher with the shock of black curls, next to him, decisively.

"Humph!—Gulash beats 'em, by gum!" grunted another shaggy youngster.

The young doctor smiled. The nationality of the three was apparent.

"Red hot plum puddin', I sye, big's 'alf yer 'ead. Ye canno' beat the like o' that, Willie, doncha know!" said a slim, blue-eyed lad at the right wing.

"Ragout est bon. Joost wan big plate fool, when you are veree hungree and cold," said a dainty youngster of large, black eyes and handsome face.

"How about sweet corn off a cob, that long, Frenchie?" said a freckled urchin, with a wide sweep of his arms. "Whacha think, Dutch?"

"Piffles!" said the blond boy. "Giff me effry time hootzel-brot mit lotsa butter."

The rest of the assembly burst out laughing.

"Wich you calla da hootzel-brot?" queried the little fellow with the black curls.

"That 'ere sweet Chrismas bread stuffed wid sliced pears," explained the boy of the freckles. "We swiped some from his mother's kitchen las' Chrismas, din' we, Dutch?"

"Oont got ketched oont shpanked,—bing!" said the blondie, jabbing him with his elbow.

"Pop co-o-orn, five a sack!" sang out the Syrian vendor, coming up the street.

"One for each," called the doctor, stepping from the porch and tossing him the money; and as the surprised youngsters took the filled sacks, thanked him and began munching that most popular of all prepared foods and "yum-yumming" over it, he walked past the cosmopolitan line of American citizens in the making with a smile of deep pleasure, saying: "That will settle it for the present, boys!"

He walked to the large building at the corner of the block and entered the wide-open door. Stepping through the corridor, he halted at an entrance into a large room, neatly decorated with potted plants. Seated about a table was a group of women as varied in type as the urchins out on the curb. All were engaged with needle work, while girls of various ages were seated near them, the older ones engaged as their mothers, the younger ones playing with toys and picture books.

In the center sat a bright-eyed young lady, reading to the assembly from Irving's Sketch Book in a pleasant tone and with clear enunciation. The smile on the faces of the women indicated that some point of Irving's quaint humor had been well understood.

The young lady, noticing the doctor's entrance, laid

down her book and came to the door.

"Is Madame Fontaine here?" he asked.

"Mrs. Fontaine," she called promptly, "the doctor wishes to see you."

A woman whose features and complexion as well as the name betrayed her French nationality, approached.

"Madam, when do you expect your daughter home from Ypsilanti?" he asked, politely.

"We have a lettere.—She weel come any minute," said the woman.

"Send her to me over at Stark's when she comes, will you, please?"

"Yes, sir."

"Thank you, madam."

The woman looked at him curiously for a moment, then left the room.

"And will you kindly show me to the music hall?" he continued to the young lady. "Up this way?—Thanks!" and he hastened up the stairway and entered the wide doorway at the head of it.

He was in an auditorium. At the farther end was a stage. On the lowered drop curtain was a painting of *Orpheus, charming the wild beasts into submission with his lyre.*

Upon the walls hung numerous small portraits of notables of the great nations of Europe and America. They were not chiefly of Czars, Emperors, Kings, Dukes, or Governors, but of the men of constructive minds, the captains in the worlds advance in science and toward universal enlightenment. There were: Franklin, Jefferson, Emerson, Henry George, Kepler, Newton, Hugo,

Rousseau, Mergenthaler, Edison, Marconi, Beethoven, Gounod, Verdi, Schiller, Shelley, Dickens, Tolstoi, and others. Also, a few generals,—curiously enough, a few generals.

A pictorial synopsis of progressive history.

He stepped through a small door, upon the stage. In one wing was a row of lockers. He took a numbered key from his pocket, and, opening the corresponding locker, he took out a beautiful silver cornet and a sheet of music. As he stepped out of the building, the young lady, still at the door, inquired:

"How is Berthold?"

"His wounds are healing, but he suffers severely from the shock. Nerves are shattered. I'm about to apply mental therapeutics. Music is a great sedative."

"You've seen that statement illustrated on the curtain upstairs!" she said with asmile, and went back to her work.

As the doctor returned down the street, he noticed the boys had emptied their sacks and, with auxiliaries from the neighborhood, were now, in the playgrounds behind the hall, playing the American National Game, with a dash and zest that were wonderful. The little Italian was umpire, the Greek at bat, the Pole pitching.

"One-a ball!" shouted the umpire. "One-a strike!—Two-a ball!"

The Greek hit a bee-liner down toward first.

"Diavolo! Run, run, son-a-ma-gun!" cried the Italian.

The Greek made for first, as though running in the Olympic course, but the wary Hungarian caught him out.

——The doctor enjoyed the comedy of the situation.

"So this is his hobby. A philanthropist of queer imagination and humor, this man Pickett. I wonder what's his motive," he said to himself, as he re-entered the sick chamber.

A young man of about twenty-five, with head and one arm bandaged, lay there between the white covers of a neat metal bed. At the opposite side of the room stood a piano and a writing desk. A motherly woman of sixty, who was bending over the young man, stepped aside as the doctor entered. The patient, with the clear brow and expressive features of a student, was very pale. His languid eyes slowly turned from his mother to the doctor.

"I have brought the music.——Lisette is coming," said Dr. Terry.

The patient smiled. "When?" he asked, faintly.

"Very soon."

"You will give her the music, if I cannot—if I should ———?"

"Hush, Berthold! You'll be able to do so yourself. —Now you be quiet, while I play this for you."

"Do you play?" said Berthold, just above a whisper.

"I used to toot the cornet some in the college band."

He adjusted the mute to the instrument and opened the music, neatly copied on ornamented note paper, on the desk before him.

"Lisette" was the superscription in large Gothic letters.

He began to play, in soft, clear tones, following faithfully the directions of the manuscript. As he proceeded, he felt something in the melody gripping his heart as noth-

ing ever had done before. The bold tone-eloquence of this young lover struck a new chord in his own soul and struck it fiercely. He himself was in the lover's mood, and he understood every word of this "song without words." He played to the magnificent climax and end.

The old mother was in tears, and as the doctor turned to Berthold, he noticed a grateful smile. A faint hue had come into the pallid features. The physician was pleased.

"The medicine is working," he said to himself. "Yes, music is a powerful sedative," then aloud: "You have written a beautiful melody. I see you have the piano accompaniment."

"You play it well—Lisette will accompany it!" The voice was perceptibly stronger than before.

"Come, Berthold," said the mother, and as the doctor raised the patient's head, she put the spoon with the tonic to his lips.

Just as they had finished, the door was gently opened, and in glided a slender, dark haired girl and went directly to the bed.

"Berthold!"

"Lisette!"

"They did not 'phone, or I should have been here last night!" She turned anxiously to the doctor. "Oh, Doctor! How badly is he hurt?"

"If you'll take good care of him, he'll recover!—— Come, Mother Stark."

He beckoned to the old lady, and left the room with her.

While he was giving the mother directions as to the care of the patient, a taxi stopped before the cottage, and

a tall young lady with a parcel in her hand, alighted from it. He recognized Vera Pickett and opened the sitting-room door.

"In this way, Miss Pickett! The other door is barricaded from within."

She guessed his meaning. "Is Lisette Fontaine in there?" she asked.

"Yes, I have bandaged him and left her to bless the bandages!——You see I have intruded into your colony! Happened to be at the factory when the accident occurred."

"You are welcome! We need you, Dr. Terry," was the cordial reply.

She was past him in a flash, embracing Mrs. Stark. The physician saw the light of warm affection in the eyes of the elder woman.

"God pless you, Miss Vera! You are always here ven it is need. Mit der doctor, you, and Lisette here, Berthold vill soon be again vell," then, with a quick glance at the doctor and the young woman, she left the room.—The doctor turned to Vera:

"Miss Pickett, I'm just beginning to penetrate the mystery of this settlement. I think I can read your thoughts, while you're here!"

"And what do you read?" she said, curiously.

"I read—if you'll pardon me: 'The freedom of the Montana hills be hanged'!"

She laughed at the remark. "Not quite!"

"At least you can dispense with it for a while. Every soul in this colony loves you!"

"I love every soul in the colony!" she replied, prompt-

ly.

"Well, it certainly beats royalty to be the angel of a community!"

"The angel role has been made very easy for me, but angels are ministers; what can I do for Berthold?"

"Perhaps the one necessary thing, Miss Pickett. There is some great worry on his mind.——What is it?"

"Plainly this," replied Vera. "He's helping Lisette finish at the Normal School this summer, since she lost her father last spring.——If he should be disabled——he has no other means, and Lisette is too kind and proud to put him to any hardship.——That's his worry.——May I go in there?"

Her hand was on the knob of the door to the sick chamber.

"You certainly may," said the doctor in a decidedly unprofessional tone.

She rapped, and Lisette's arms were about her and drew her within.

The doctor sat drumming on the table with his fingers and looking out of the window.

"And a superb assistant this philanthropist has!" he mused. "The very light of the colony. They'd be toads if they didn't love her!" And the love melody of Berthold began to sing through his soul again, and he appended to it the old fanciful verse:

"If I were King——
The stars should be your pearls upon a string,
And you should have the sun and moon to wear,
If I were King!"

Ten minutes later, Vera returned.

"Perhaps I've been able to assist you a bit, Doctor," she said.

"I'm sure of that!"

From the package in her hand she handed him a sheet of printed music. He was surprised. It was Berthold's "Lisette."

"I declare! When was it published?" he exclaimed.

"Oh, the 'angel of the community' had a copy of the manuscript, and knew the needs of the composer, and that they harmonize with the musical schemes of my father. The first edition appeared just in time. A thouand copies already sold! So if Berthold turns a somersault out of bed tomorrow, please don't take all the credit for the cure!"

"I certainly would be ashamed to, fair patroness of the arts!" exclaimed the doctor, delighted. "I'll turn a somersault myself in a minute! 'Angel role' is correct!"

"It's all in the scheme of the settlement," she replied. "When are you coming to the house?"

"After your advertised concert. This unkempt Westerner will be there, too."

"Then I'll need to outdo myself, Sir Knight of the Lariat! Berthold praises your playing and I hear you are a great critic!" she said coquettishly, as he accompanied her to the taxi.

"Not an atom of one. I shall come to admire and be pleased."

She thanked him and bid him goodbye.

He did not return to the sick room that day, but left instructions with the mother. When he returned the fol-

lowing day and approached the cottage, he heard music. It was Berthold, playing his melody and Lisette the accompaniment. A veritable love-symphony now! The doctor stood at the gate and listened, entranced, to the end.——He was still in the mood.

He looked down the row of cottages. Half a dozen pairs of young males and females were standing at as many gates, also listening. He knew that they were conversing in different languages, but they all understood the language of that melody.

"Beats the popcorn!" he said to himself.

About all he could do on entering the house was to congratulate Berthold and chide him for breaking all records of convalescents.

"Blame it on Lisette, Miss Pickett, and that melody!" said Berthold.

"What induced you to compose?" asked the doctor.

Berthold laughed. "Despair!" he said. "When I made love to Lisette in German, French or English, I generally made a botch of it, so I made up a chemical compound of all the vocabularies and like the robin to his mate, talked to her in melody. That turned the trick!"

As Dr. Terry drove down the street, he glanced toward the lot behind the music hall. The Cosmopolitan baseball teams were playing the last game of their "world's series." This time a little Yankee lad from up street was umpire. The Russian was at bat, and the Hungarian, German, Frenchman and Englishman were awaiting their innings. The Russian had just struck out.

"More ov zee popcorn for you!" said the little Frenchman.

On later visits, the doctor noticed that many of the young folks of the settlement had purchased copies of "Lisette" and were playing it, even the youngsters of the baseball teams were whistling it, and he heard it whistled down-town. A copy of it was all the fee he would accept of the composer.

Berthold was pleased at his little success. "Lisette" was actually making money for Lisette's final tuition, thanks to Vera's management.

"There's nothing so plausible to mortals as music," he remarked to Lisette. "If I had written you the finest love-letter and published it, few would have taken notice, but now that I have put my thoughts, German, French and English, into tones, even the Chinamen down town are whistling and dancing them!"

And when he said it he knew not that he was supporting a pet idea of the founder of the settlement.

Chapter IV.

AT THE BUNGALOW.

The much-discussed and advertised concert had been a success. It had been a charity concert. The price had been a dollar and upward per seat. The magnificent hall had been crowded to the doors. The elegantly clad audience had been profuse with it sapplause, and the news-

paper critics lavish with their praise of the performers.

Phil Beffel had been hailed as a "second Plancon," and when it came to Vera, who had appeared both as singer and violinist, they consulted their revised dictionaries for new superlatives. And as to the director, Burton Calvert, it was written in the stars that he would ere long be director of a great symphony.

Before the concert, Vera had privately expressed her lack of enthusiasm for charity entertainments. She would have preferred to have those "vulgar poor" present at the concert, for whom the money was to be raised. She would have had conditions so that they could afford to be present. Their presence would have made the performance more enjoyable, and more inspiring to the artists. Besides, confining art to the few favored was laying up trouble for the future. But she was criticised for voicing some of her father's known eccentricities.

The week preceding the performance had been one of both hard work and deep enjoyment for Vera and Mr. Calvert. They were in each other's company the greater part of each day, glad in their mutual interests and in their co-operation in the art both of them loved to cultivate. Vera's success at the performance was, no doubt, largely due to the zeal of Mr. Calvert to have his pupil and friend excel. Rumors of the engagement of the two were already afloat. Miss Pomeroy, the popular soprano, had been known in the role of the director's fiancee before, but she was now far away, in Europe.

It was the evening of the Monday following the entertainment. In the spacious library of the Pickett bungalow were seated about a huge square oak table, Armin Pickett,

Vera, and Dr. Glenn Terry. On the table lay the plan of a square of buildings.

The room had much of the appearance of a sumptuous hunting lodge, with huge stained rafters overhead. The furniture was rustic and heavy mission; the pictures on the walls were mostly western landscapes and hunting scenes; the hardwood floor was strewn with pelts of mountain-lion, lynx, fox, and wolf.

"Philanthropist?— Thanks, thats a better title than some have given me," Mr. Pickett was saying. "Yet, after all, philanthropy is often but a symptom of trouble—occasionally even of a troubled conscience. In my case, I confess, there's a peculiar constitutional need for the work you've observed. I've an unsatisfied grudge against someone. Such a grudge might become a cumbersome monomania. I'm fighting a bogy with a hobby; fighting an ancient inner call to feud with the dream of the pacifist and with the diversion of experiments in the cause of peace."

"He's joking again," said Vera, looking at her father incredulously. "A fine feudist you would make, daddy!"

"I agree with Miss Vera, but I divine your idea in building this cosmopolitan settlement in the heart of Detroit," remarked the young physician, studying the chart before him.

"I shall not cause any great commotion in the world by this hobby," continued Mr. Pickett, "but it's a pleasant, wholesome diversion. I've created, so to speak, an experiment station to test out and harmonize certain social forces, in order to produce the best social results, just as, for agriculture, we build experiment stations in

order to attain the great economy that results from a knowledge of the use of chemical and physical forces.

"Possibly, my young friend, you are of those who say: 'War?—Hm! Political catastrophe—natural phenomenon—we'll always have war'."

"I would rather believe," replied the doctor, "that humanity will, in time, learn better to control its energies, as it now largely controls and utilizes steam and the electric current—both of them, when unharnessed, as destructive as the human passions,—that, as we have practically eliminated remedial blood-letting from surgery, so social and political science will gradually eliminate war as a remedy for international diseases."

"I'm glad we agree in this," said the elder man. "And yet we have, today, a horrible civil war in Mexico, and all Europe is armed to the teeth, troubled with the nightmare of a great, impending international conflict."

"The stage seems set for it, judging from armaments," Dr. Terry admitted. "They are practically before the alternatives: *disarmament*, *bankruptcy*, or *war*. If there is to be another great war, I should suggest that men, while they are reverting, revert to cannibalism, and each eat the enemy he kills! It would be but an additonal lapse down the scale, would be more sanitary, and would help out the commissariat!"

"Doctor Terry!" protested Vera with a shudder.

"Decidedly, Doctor, and it might deprive warfare of that modern, hypocritical euphemism: 'civilized warfare'."

"As a physician," continued the young man, "I see one obstacle to perpetual peace in the fact that preventive

measures are not popular. The medical profession would not grow fat by them. Prevention takes forethought and effort. The remedy, the operation, after the mischief is done, is more spectacular and therefore more popular. War is surgery, which might have been prevented by prophylaxis, if people knew the trick and were willing to employ it."

"What is it that makes modern wars?" asked Vera.

"Here's the short prelude to one:" replied Mr. Pickett. "Organized greed (that superlative development of the primeval instinct of self-preservation) i. e., mighty commercial groups formed under protection of the armies of their respective governments; a race for the world's markets; unbearable rivalry and jealousy; exhaustion of all secret, underhand tricks of diplomacy. Then explosion—force—war!"

"A natural sequence," remarked Dr. Terry.

"As logical as modern business methods themselves. Nation against nation as corporation against corporation. Nations levy tariffs to gain advantage over one another. Why not fight? Take tariffs and national prejudices, blind 'patriotism', out of the human program and give mankind some universal language, and we might, in time, have international peace.—I am not now 'meddling with the tariff', though it's the mother of monopoly, and monopoly is one of the great causes of war; for instance, the cause of the present Mexican war,—and I am a land monopolist! We'll some day saw off this branch on which we are sitting; but just now I'm fiddling on another string."

"Your experiment station is directed against national

prejudices?"

"It is. The war-promoter's handmaid is that very race prejudice. Nations are as children, surprised that the moon shines also over the garden of their neighbors. The '*foreign* barbarian' is not supposed to think and feel as we do. *Foreigners* are exploited, by aid of race prejudice, in all countries. Foreigners, for instance, come to our hospitable American shores by the thousands, with their loved ones, dreaming golden dreams of equality and prosperity. One day there is a great disaster in one of our coal mines. The newspapers report 'three hundred *foreigners* killed, but only fifteen American!' We mourn the fate of the fifteen American families!"

"Still, as Zangwill says, America is the melting-pot of nations."

"Not only America—the whole world is that melting-pot. Science is heating the melting-pot and stirring the ingredients. International telegraph, steamship and railroad lines are welding the nations. Popular enlightenment—democracy, will mean the end of secret diplomacy, nations are learning each other's languages and dropping national prejudices, they intermarry more readily and their sympathies become international, they exchange instructors in their universities and thus they aid one another in maintaining a friendly equality in intellectual development.

"Adjustment of great inequalities must always come through catastrophe. To avoid catastrophe, one would have to prevent great inequalities. *Wars between nations could only be prevented through a free and open exchange of all advantages in all fields of activity,* gained by the

respective nations. In their interchange of scientists, artists, and virtuosos, nations are, if gradually, binding themselves together with bonds as universal as the human race and more potent than all the flimsy, international chip-on-the-shoulder treaties of all times."

"I begin to understand your 'experiment station' better, Mr. Pickett."

"Indeed, and there's pleasure in this hobby. I have assembled in the colony families of fourteen distinct nationalities. I have built them a public hall in which I employ an instructor in English and also their respective languages (if one chooses to learn that of the other), and several instructors in *that wonderful universal language, the literature of which is for high and low of people of all tongues—music.* And there's the point! Men have tried artificial languages: Volapük and Esperanto, to promote understanding and peace. Until they succeed, where, so far, they have failed, the best substitute is art, especially the most eloquent of the arts, music. The thought is ancient. The story of Orpheus and the wild beasts depicted on the stage curtain in our auditorium is many centuries old. I like to experiment with the idea. You must hear my orchestra."

"If Miss Pickett has inherited her superb gift from her father, I want to hear it!"

"You've already paid me too many compliments, Doctor," declared Vera from her reclining chair, whence she had followed the discourse intently, wondering why her father unbosomed himself so effusively to this young stranger, pleased also, that they held similar views. "But you'll like the orchestra."

"Fourteen nations are represented in it," proceeded Mr. Pickett, "and we are already a very intimate and jolly fraternity. There never will be war in the 'Little Hague"; though none of these people have been told my purpose nor that I have given the settlement that name.—Come to our recital next Saturday evening. Nothing grand, but at least a novelty."

"You'll not need to urge me, after this discourse," said the doctor.

He had been observing Mr. Pickett intently during his last utterances.

"Mr. Pickett," he said, "you remind me of a music teacher of my baby-hood. His first musical lecture to me and a little sister of mine was on the bug orchestra: the katydid with her fiddle, the locust with his drum, the beetle with his rattler!"

"Indeed, a method similar to father's," remarked Vera. "He amused me with like fairy tales when I was a babe."

Mr. Pickett, who had been looking into the empty fireplace, was quick to reply:

"It's an old, well approved method. Another nature-crank like myself, I suppose."

The doctor was still searching Mr. Pickett's countenance.

"I used to put foolish questions to him during these lectures; for instance, whether the grasshopper ever ripped his trousers at the knee, when he jumped a rail fence!"

Mr. Pickett laughed loudly and heartily and arose from his chair. He looked toward the open window, and

for a moment stood gazing out as at an apparition. Then he continued:

"What music did he teach you?"

"I remember 'Turkey in the Straw' on the flageolet!"

Mr. Pickett laughed again, louder than before. "He ought to have been hanged for that!" he declared. Just then the telephone rang. He excused himself and hastened through the dining room to his den. Arriving there, he turned on the lights, then suddenly turned them out again and looked out upon the lawn, lit up only by the stars and shaded by great elm trees. Was it his imagination that pictured a human form just disappearing in the shadows? There was nothing visible there now. On the wall before him, above his writing desk, barely visible in the darkness, hung a 38-caliber revolver and below it a clarinet—a curious combination. He reached for the revolver, but hesitated and finally took down the clarinet. Then he stood for a moment in deep thought.

"I should have gone to the ends of the earth to have had her meet him—I should have gone to the ends of the earth to have had her avoid him!" he said at last.

He turned on the lights. The table before him was strewn with plans of buildings and maps of city districts.

"Confounded reckless of me to speak so freely of my affairs to Glenn Terry. Yet, after what I've heard from Harper Hospital, all may be well—all may yet be well," he muttered. Then after a third and violent ring of the telephone, he took up the receiver.

When her father left the room, Vera was on the point of asking: "Dr. Terry, have you ever met, in Denver, one Samuel Blake?" but, though she had, since the newspaper

report of the automobile accident, continually associated the two Denver men in her mind, she remembered her father's request. Instead, she led the young physician into the music room and showed him a priceless art and music collection. The works were by artists of various nations.

The oddest among the oil paintings was that of a western scene. It presented a man on the crest of a cliff, firing his pistol at a rattlesnake in the ravine below. He had shattered the reptile's head. The rattler had been coiled up ready to spring upon a beautiful young woman, who, in her alarm at the shot, had leaped forward, enfolding a little girl in her protecting arms, in evident forgetfulness of self.

"It was my father, rescuing a young schoolteacher out walking in the Montana hills with a pupil. The teacher afterwards became my mother.—It was their first meeting.

Dr. Terry noted the striking resemblance between the girl in the picture and Vera. And Mr. Pickett, pacifist, was very imposing as a sharpshooter!

"Again I am reminded of that friend of my childhood," he remarked. "He had the nucleus of just such an art collection and revelled in it."

"I hope my father and I may meet this man some day."

"There's small likelihood. He left Denver years ago and is not likely to re-appear."

"What was the trouble?"

"He was a self-confessed criminal."

"Such a man as that?"

"'Such a man as that!' is what we have thought all

these years."

*** "Well," said Mr. Pickett, as he re-entered the room, "I've sold another farm at Thorwald, Montana. Just closed the deal over the 'phone. The man was told every detail as to soil, drainage, water, climate, market, neighbors. He'll make good. Saved him from a land-shark; one Samuel Blake."

At mention of this name both Vera and Dr. Terry looked startled, but nothing was said.

Betsy announced visitors—the Pickett bungalow was ever open to Phil Beffel, Mr. Calvert, Ethel Culver, and the rest of that musical cluster.

Beffel came in all out of breath and with his hands pressed to his stomach.

"Holy Beethoven!" he panted, "my solar plexus is punctured! How will I ever sing another low C! Mr. Pickett, what kind of diving demons do you harbor on your premises? Didn't one of the spike-faced wraiths just flit through a gap in your hedge as I came along, strike me with his tilted cupola smack in the midriff, poke me from under my hat and take the last dotted thirty-second note of wind out of my bellows? And when I came to and took after the fellow who ran like the old wireless, in spite of a nasty limp, he slid into a motor car and waved me a fond farewell!—What do you call it, Mr. von Pickett?"

Mr. Pickett had listened very attentively.

"Some new species of grasshopper from my lawn, I reckon!" he said with a squint at Dr. Terry, and hastened to introduce the latter to the newcomers.

"Ah, the sharpshooter from the wild wooly!" blurted

out Beffel and told the pond-lily story.

"I never perform in public," replied the doctor good-naturedly, "and, besides, marksmanship is a lost art. Wars are over and the millenium ahead!" He saluted Mr. Pickett. "Moreover, Miss Pickett probably overestimated my skill."

"We'll challenge it some day, but this evening we'll have music," said Mr. Pickett.

Vera handed Dr. Terry a cornet. "Lisette and Berthold betrayed you, remember!" she said.

The program progressed splendidly. They were among the Italian composers. The handsome young Westerner was sustaining his part well. He and Mr. Calvert were fast becoming friends. They had just finished playing a beautiful nocturne when Mr. Pickett suddenly announced:

"The next number on the list is 'Turkey in the Straw'! —a favorite of our friend from Denver—taught him on the flageolet in his babyhood by some old charlatan, who ought to be hanged for it!"

All, including the doctor, looked at him in curious surprise, but he had his clarinet at his lips and hustled them into the comical old melody. Phil Beffel grabbed Ethel Culver and they outdanced the lumber jacks. All vied with Dr. Terry in furnishing extra flourishes, Vera excelling in these on the violin.

Thus the musical program was brought to a close with a goodnatured crash and bang.

"I hope you were all edified and elevated," remarked Glenn Terry, "but I wish to object to Mr. Pickett's statement. The man who taught me that, may have been a

humorist, but he was not a charlatan, and though he came near being hanged at one time, he never will be while I have a chance at the hangman!"

**** The following morning Mr. Pickett rose with the sun and hastened into the garden. In the wet, soft turf near the library window and across a newly raked flower bed, he found the footprints of a man. His trained frontiersman's eye found the left imprint deeper than the right. He called the old gardner, who lived in a cabin at the rear of the premises, measured the size of the footprints and had the old man witness this and the disparity of the impressions.

Chapter V.

THE PROWLER.

The evening of Dr. Terry's visit at the Pickett bungalow was a very busy one at the down-town office of Samuel Blake, local agent for the C. & L. Land Co., of Denver. The efficient representative, having recovered from the injuries sustained in the automobile accident, excepting a stiffness of one knee joint, had satisfied, that day, no less than half a dozen land-hungry, get-rich-quick urbanites—all of them more ambitious than discreet. He was just dismissing the last of them.

"As fine an eighty acres as ever lay out of doors, sir!

The very choice of those alluvial bottom lands. That deed's worth ten times the eight thousand you paid for it —always providing—providing you're capable and industrious, sir, as I know you are. There have been those, who went out there and failed—absolute bunglers—bunglers and incompetents—spineless, brainless, useless drones. But for you, sir—a land of unlimited possibilities.—Well, goodbye, and good luck to you."

He chuckled softly as he closed the door on the deluded citizen, who had invested his all in this venture to regain his lost health and make his fortune "back on the land," and whose blood was now tingling, in his very fingertips, with the hopes infused by this spellbinder.

"The third sucker to whom I've sold that same strip of quicksand in the past two years. He'll not be able to raise a disturbance on it, and it's our strip for a song in another year at most!"

He arranged his papers, locked his desk and pushed a bell button.

"My car, at once!" he commanded the entering office boy, and, slipping into his coat, sat waiting.

"Pickett—Pickett—Pickett!—He recognized me, but I would not have him know I recognized him, as I came to, that evening.—To have him pop up right here—confound it!—Well, either he gets out, or I.—Wonder if I've that address right.—So Pickett's the name—Armin Pickett! I've seen it in the journals a hundred times, without a suspicion."

In less than half an hour, he was within a block of the Pickett bungalow. He parked his machine on the side street and proceeded hastily and nervously toward the

hedge surrounding the premises. There were no passers-by—all was quiet. Through an aperture in the hedge, he saw the rays of a bright light from the window. He listened, and then slid through the aperture.

Approaching almost into the path of the light, he saw within, Mr. Pickett, Vera, and Dr. Terry, engaged in animated conversation. Vera was just regarding the young physician with rather an admiring look.—Samuel Blake seemed stunned for a moment.

"That young man—here!"

He stood gazing and listening for a few minutes. Then, of a sudden, he leaped back into the darkness: Mr. Pickett had turned to the window, burst into a loud laugh, as though in mockery, and seemed to stare directly at him.—Had he seen the prowler without?

He walked some distance toward the hedge and paused.

"That combination is bad!" he muttered.

For a moment it appeared to him as though every window of the house was ablaze, and from each one stared the stern face of that tall man within.

Then of a sudden he started again and, stumbling across a flower bed, darted through the hedge. In the light of another window, Mr. Pickett's face was staring out into the night, and at him again, then both light and face suddenly disappeared.

He rushed out upon the street, heedless of what was before him, and there occurred the collision with big Phil Beffel, the pursuit, and the flight in the automobile.

"By the old mischief, that will never do—never!" he growled on his way down to his office—He had the dan-

gerous habit of growling to himself.—"An acquaintance between these two young people, possibly an engagement and marriage, the old investigation resumed, the facts out—and it's all off with uncle Samuel Blake. So far the young man doesn't know the old gent. I heard him call him 'Mr. Pickett'. He must never learn to know him, and this little budding friendship between the young folks must be made impossible. It's war between the old man and me, and Jack and Jill are absolute contraband."

Chapter VI.

A PEACE PHANTASY.

When Mr. Calvert and Dr. Terry entered the concert hall at the "Little Hague" on Saturday evening, they found it brilliantly lighted from prism chandeliers. Above the painting of *Orpheus and the Wild Beasts* on the drop curtain of the stage, was printed, for the occasion, the familiar quotation from Shakespeare:

> "The man that hath no music in himself,
> Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds,
> Is fit for treasons, strategems, and spoils."

On the wall near them they read another inscription, a translation from the German:

"Where men sing, there rest and fear no wrongs;
Men of bad intentions have no songs."

The hall was fragrant with flowers from the many gardens of the settlement arranged in beautiful bouquets on windowsills, tables, and before the footlights.

The auditorium was nearly filled. Young lads with fresh roses in their buttonholes, ushered. The two men were shown to a seat near the front.

Glancing back a moment, they beheld an audience of more than usual interest. No silk and broadcloth there, but all arrayed in their best, the women generally in white. And the faces—they were all represented there, those fourteen nationalities of the settlement, mingled in a most interesting manner. Among the matrons and fathers of all types, the Irish lass was seated with the Danish lad, the German maid with the English youth, the dark eyed Hungarian girl with the sprightly Italian filio, the stalwart Russian with the chic French mademoiselle. And all in festive mood.

The orchestra of nearly thirty pieces was seated in the pit. In membership, male and female, it appeared even more cosmopolitan than the average symphony orchestra. Lisette was there, at the piano, and Berthold played first cornet. Armin Pickett directed.

The opening number was an ingeniously arranged and spiritedly rendered medley of fourteen national airs. That orchestra had never played national airs but as a medley.

How they applauded, those cosmopolites!

Then followed, in rapid succession, a series of curious musical numbers.

The curtain rose, the auditorium was darkened, and upon the canvas at the back of the stage was pictured vividly a scene in the Scotch Highlands. A sturdy Scotchman in kilts sat on an improvised boulder, at one side, with his bagpipe, and played his wild airs to the soft accompaniment of the orchestra. Then came a glimpse into the German Black Forest, and a melody of the Fatherland played on the zither by the elder Stark—a scene in the Calabrian mountains and a canto amoroso by an Italian girl in native costume—a view of the beautiful Champagne and a ditty by a French youth—an Irish scene and a song of the Emerald Island home by an Irish lass—then an Englishman stepped forth on the shores of Cornwall and sang a salute to the sea—before a Russian peasant hut, a Russian matron sang a lullaby to her child —finally appeared the interior of a Dutch cathedral and a Hollander, a deep basso, sang from an oratorio of religious faith in tones that seemed to shake the very pillars photographed on the canvas.

How they applauded, those cosmopolites!

Thereupon appeared the inevitable Phil Beffel, the megaphonic comedian, engaged by Mr. Pickett to sing and recite a number of burlesques on the different nationalities represented in the audience. The witty Irishman, the humorous German, the bonny Scotchman, the complaisant Englishman, the polite Frenchman, the impulsive Italian, the jolly Swiss and the rest, each came in for his share of "roasting" and comic impersonation, throwing the audience into convulsions of laughter.

In conclusion, Vera appeared upon the stage, at the wing. She was not singing that night but had her violin.

As she bowed her acknowledgment of the hearty demonstration that greeted her, she looked down to where Mr. Calvert and Dr. Terry were sitting, and to the doctor her eyes seemed to say: "Now follow me, whithersoever I lead you, even on the trail of the 'hobby'!"

The doctor was never so deeply impressed with her beauty before. She was dressd in a simple, ivory colored gown, in perfect harmony with her delicate complexion and the flaxen ringlets about her brows. Now her head was bent gracefully and thoughtfully over the violin. Was she trying to comprehend her father's curious day-dream? Mr. Pickett stepped to his stand. All eyes went to the program.

"'The World Citizen'
A Fantasy
By an Unknown Composer."

This was the title, and the program went on to describe the travels of a Swiss musician who, repudiated and banished by his own people, starts on a long journey through the countries of Europe, the Orient, and the Occident, studying the folksongs and melodies of each. Finally, having, through their musical manifestations, the only means possible to mortal, explored the hearts of all the great tribes of men, he returns home, and the acquired universality of his love and his art, now given expression in a wonderful composition, a medley of many elemental themes, exerts a new charm and wins him great applause and fame among his countrymen.

"The composer," the fantastic program went on, "en-

thused by his world knowledge, and passion, has now appealed to the different national governments for the institution of annual *international music-tourneys*—the first to be held at Geneva, the birthplace of the Red Cross—in which orchestras from every land may meet in friendly competition for prizes, the final performance of each tourney to be a grand combination of all organizations present, in the rendition of the works of the world's masters, with the purpose of fostering a feeling of international amity by the most effective means available: *the universal language of the tone.*"

Mr. Pickett raised his baton, and the orchestra began the great medley. Dr. Terry and his companion looked up from the program. The lights were out again. Vera was turning toward the canvas up stage, where a series of wonderful moving pictures was now unfolded.

The opening Swiss scene with its snow-capped mountains and crystal lakes was magnificent, and how cleverly Vera imitated the warbles and yodels of the merry mountaineers!—Then she led them through the vales of France, England, Germany and Scandinavia, over the vast steppes of Russia, through Greece, Italy, and the hills and valleys of Andalusia, on through the magic lands of North Africa and the Orient, then over the seas to America, and back to the heart of Europe, Switzerland, again. Everywhere the motion picture artist had selected the most characteristic landscapes, scenes of folk-festivals, of carnivals, of industry, and of worship, and produced the people in their peculiar costumes; and everywhere Vera's violin sang their songs with a voice true and mellow as that of the human throat and vari-colored as the moods of the human

heart.

The grand climax came when orchestra and soloist leaped into Beethoven's 9th Symphony and gave expression in tremendous strains to the exultant words of the text—the "Hymn to Joy":

"I embrace you, all ye millions!
Here, this kiss to all the world!"

as they were printed on the programs; and a chorus, in costumes of Orient and Occident, filled the stage and sang the words.

As if by one impulse, the audience rose in their seats and cheered—cheered and exclaimed in a dozen languages!

Vera modestly withdrew, while the chorus, led on by the orchestra, launched into a series of folk dances as danced in all the lands from the Pyrenees to the Urals, ending in the magnificent Blue Danube waltz of Strauss.

Spontaneously the audience cleared the floor of the folding chairs and joined in the dances. The doctor and Mr. Calvert were moved by the same impulse, and Vera appeared and introduced them to some of the young people. Mr. Calvert had the first dance with her, but the final Beautiful Blue Danube waltz, she reserved for Dr. Terry, and as they stepped to the measures of this happiest waltz of the Waltz King, the doctor entered completely into the dream of Mr. Pickett, and the vision of the Danube changed to that of the Rhine, the Seine, the Tiber, the Thames, the Hudson and the Detroit, and the beatific spirit that hovered over them all was the beautiful exponent of the dream, Vera, at his side, and his only wish

was never to escape from the spell.

Mr. Pickett came and shook hands with the young men.

"Who is the 'Unknown Composer'?" asked Dr. Terry, suspiciously.

Mr. Pickett laughed his characteristic laugh. "I couldn't find a man for the part, so I had to try my hand at it myself!"

The doctor saluted in appreciation.

Before they parted, that evening, Mr. Calvert said to Vera: "You and your father have given us a very pretty peace phantasy—very obviously that—tonight, but when a handsome young lady repeats in public, even by violin string, such words of a poet as: 'Here, this kiss to all the world'—it's a very serious matter!"

"Desperately serious!" mocked Vera.

"A cause for war!" said Dr. Terry.

Chapter VII.

THE WRONG DOG.

"Well I know the trail up to the cedars,
Well I know where the splashing runnel spills
Floods of fairy silver down
On the brake-decked sandstone brown,
In the hollow of the free and friendly hills.

"Heart, swing down behind the clattering cattle,
Ride, ride again and hear the liquid trills
Breaking from the pinetree bough;
Sing it, bird, oh sing it now:
Sing the rapture of the free and fragrant hills!"

These stanzas from the western poet Dr. Terry had read in pyrography on a red cedar slab in the rustic Pickett library. He had known them by heart for years, and now he repeated them to Vera, as they cantered along the Detroit boulevard on their own western ponies that splendid July morning. She was pleased to hear he was familiar with the verses. They expressed for both a natural longing for the mountains of their native western states.

"Yes, I often miss the mountains, and note that with you also 'tis not always: 'The freedom of the hills be hanged!' " said Vera.

"I would not live away from the sight of them for a month, but for the research work that holds me here for the present. When I've cut my professional eye teeth, I shall go back and practice in old Denver."

"Just as Father and I intend to go back to Montana."

They found themselves on common ground and chatted happily of childhood memories.

And wonderful was the inspiration of that morning, and delightful that return to the exhilarating habit of the West: riding! Lightly they both sat their ponies, whose necks and flanks glistened and flashed in the sun. And not a single indigenous or exotic shrub or tree on the boulevard lawn with which they were not both familiar.

The birds, on limb or wing, were also common friends.

And it seemed to Dr. Terry as though, with the graceful, laughing girl at his side there was borne back to him on the light limbs of the prancing western pony, the queen of all his childhood dreams and the fulfillment of all his happy boyhood visions.

They had not gone far before they both noticed, on the opposite side of the boulevard, an automobile, from which a sharp featured man was pointing out to several fellow passengers some building lots beyond. The man was recognized by both of them, but apparently took no notice of the two equestrians. They did not perceive a quick, cautious turn of his head and a searching glance, after they had passed.

"The man Blake, from whom your father said he saved that land purchaser," remarked Dr. Terry.

"Are you acquainted with him?" Vera saw her opportunity to get some light on that dark subject.

"He was once a successful political rival of my father in Denver. There was never any love lost between them."

"Successful?"

"Through an accident! and besides nothing is beneath that fellow," and Vera noticed an angry flash in the doctor's eyes and saw him clench his fist about his riding whip as though anxious to lay it across a miscreant's back.—He evaded all further discussion of the subject.

Now, by Vera's request, they left the boulevard and rode out along a country road, shaded, for some distance, with maple and poplar. Herds of blooded dairy cattle were seen in the pastures on either hand. All the charm

of a peaceful, thrifty country community was about them, the charm that entrances the wayfarer and causes young hearts to long.

Near noon they approached a country school house. It had grown hot, and they were letting their ponies follow their own gait. The summer school children were just coming out for lunch.

The doctor and Vera dismounted and Vera, at the pump, where one of the little ones handed her a drink, was soon distributing bonbons among the pupils, while Dr. Terry led the ponies across the street and tied them in the shade.

Suddenly, amid that peaceful scene, he heard a terrific howling and yelping, and, looking up, saw a huge terrier dashing down the street, with fiercely frothing mouth and blazing eyes, in pursuit of a small spaniel. He saw the large beast bury his fangs in the sides of the spaniel and then come wildly on toward the group of school children and Vera.

"A mad dog!"

He reached for the holster at his saddle. Luckily there was his good Colts' pistol. Snatching it, he leaped, with the nimbleness of an Indian, to the middle of the road. The mad animal was still several rods up the street. The man stood at ease for a moment; then a flash from the pistol, and a dead brute rolled over in the dust.

Turning about, the doctor was strangely startled by the scene he beheld. There stood Vera, with sudden alarm stamped on her beautiful young features, spontaneously throwing her protecting arms about several of the children. Now she looked at him gratefully, when she saw

how true his marksmanship had been. And then, in a moment, the color rose to her face at the look of admiration and wonder in Glenn Terry's eyes.

He was thinking of that other picture in Vera's library. He was thinking the thought of that other marksman, her father. She saw it in a moment and was startled out of her forgetfulness of self. But she recovered her self-possession in a moment.

"Bravo, Dr. Terry!" she cried, as she held out her hand to him. He pressed it warmly.

"*You* would have hit him, if you had had the gun! I hear you've been a famous huntress out West!" he said.

"Coming at that speed?—I should have lost my nerve at the sight. I'm afraid."

"So we may be glad, after all, marksmanship is not a lost art!" he said with a laugh.

By this time the teacher and the neighboring farmer with his boys had come upon the scene. The terrier was found to have been hit exactly midway between the eyes. The doctor left orders to have the carcass sent to the city laboratory for examination, and to have the spaniel locked up. The examination later revealed rabies.

"What does it require to become an expert sharpshooter?" asked Vera, as they rode on through the country.

"A steady nerve, true eye, practice, and a clear conscience!"

"That's why my father and you excel."

"Your father, I'm sure!"

"Both of you advocates of peace and still practiced

experts in the art of killing!—On guard, Mr. Pacifico!"

"While there's no peace, neither between man and man, nor between man and beast, how convenient the art is, in defense!"

"Particularly against snakes, mad dogs and maniacs, that may interrupt the most peaceful idyl, as has just happened, you would say."

"You may go to the head of the class!" he rallied. "Society, organized on the most perfect common-sense peace plan, and still expert in defending itself against monstrosities: there's an ideal to contemplate!"

"Too bad that even Orpheus was not able to finish the program and subdue also the freaks!"

"For that reason, Miss Pickett, you'll have to pardon me for being deadlier than a mad dog!"

"Granted!" she laughed, then, growing serious: "To think of what might have happened to the children if you had missed him!"

Again the young man was reminded of the girl in the painting.

Late in the afternoon of that day, Dr. Terry and Vera Pickett rode leisurely homeward along the country road, just as the birds, after the lull of the hot noon hours, were beginning to chirp their evening song. Some brooding ones had left their nests and were flitting about with their mates, all the joy and hope of love in their carols. The lowing of cattle and whinney of horses could be heard far and near, and often the ponies would answer. A plow-boy whistled and sang in joyful contentment as he followed his team between the rows of corn. Vera was patting her pony's head and speaking softly, caressingly to

him, at which he would prick up his ears and prance and caper with becoming pony pride.

Dr. Terry saw and heard and felt all the appeal and urging of nature about them, and when the inevitable moment arrived, he felt the tensity of it, as did the beautiful girl beside him.

"Miss Pickett," he said, after a pause in their conversation, filled with the voice of creatures all around, "it was a reproduction of the picture in the library,—the one of the first meeting of your father and mother—and the little pupil—was it not? You recognized it as well as I—I would give my inheritance to the artist who could paint the new picture for me!"

Vera cast a swift glance at her escort, and then the lids fell and the beautiful crimson was on the classic features again. She turned and looked away, over the fields toward the city.

"A little rural scene like that would not be worth a great deal," she said.

"All that life is worth, to me—if I were in the picture, myself—with you, Miss Vera—if I were made happy by this queer, mysterious coincidence which points to some circumstantial relationship—if my pistol shot would bring me good fortune as your father's brought him—if the story of the old painting could be repeated—for as your father loved your mother, so do I love you, Miss Pickett."

"Doctor—Glenn Terry——"

She looked up at him now, and in those wonderful eyes was the deep mystery that must solve itself in a moment and decide the fateful question of his life. It was a moment of supreme rapture and agony for him. She

had called him by his first name, but had retained the "Doctor." He was leaning eagerly and appealingly toward her.

"Halloo, there!" suddenly came a voice from the rear, and, both turning in their saddles with a start, they saw Mr. Pickett loping toward them on a spirited black pony, his jovial smile barely visible at the distance.

"Do speak, Miss Vera!" was the doctor's quick, almost frantic appeal. "Do you love me?"

"Wait!" she said, gently.

It was well that Mr. Pickett was some rods away when he called, for it gave the two young people a chance to regain their self-possession. Vera's color still betrayed the deep emotion the doctor's ardent words had aroused in her. Mr. Pickett's quick eye noticed, as he rode up, the afterglow of this and the effort to appear calm, in the doctor.

"It got the best of me, children," he called to them when still several horselengths behind. "The idea of your having all this sport to yourselves! It got me—the western fever did, and I thought I'd come out and canter over a mile or two myself."

"Children," sounded good to Glenn Terry, but "cantering over a mile or two" appeared euphemism for "trampling on a heart or two" just then.

There was nothing to do but make the best of it. Mr. Picket, knowing quite well what he had interrupted, made no move to ride on ahead, but would have them understand plainly, that he was with them for the rest of the trip home.

Vera relieved the situation at once. "Doctor Terry

deserves a gold medal for marksmanship today," she declared, and told of the shooting of the mad dog.

"There were no rattlesnakes!" remarked the doctor with a sidelong glance at Mr. Pickett.

The eyes of the latter lit up with a strange, kindly light.

"Good for you, Dr. Terry, and God bless you for saving my little girl!—I could not have done better." But he could not help adding: "The owner of that dog ought to have practiced *prophylaxis!*"

"How about the mother of a certain rattlesnake?" shot back the doctor.

"She should have employed an extracting dentist, of course, as a *preventive* measure!"

They cantered on, three abreast, Vera in the middle. The doctor spoke of meeting Sam Blake on the boulevard.

"You know him, do you?" asked Mr. Pickett.

"Without taking particular pride in the acquaintance," was the reply.

"Are you sure you shot the right dog?"

"Not quite!" said the young man, as he contemplated Mr. Pickett curiously.

"I suppose you've sent the carcass to the health office for examinaition?"

"Yes."

"The record of the other dog is at Harper Hospital."

They were turning into the boulevard, and the rush of vehicles and other matters took their attention, though both Vera and the doctor were set to thinking by Mr. Pickett's remark.

When Glenn Terry rode out between the hedges of the driveway at the Pickett dwelling later, to hasten to his office, it was with an encouraging smile tht Vera, standing on th everanda beside her father, dismissed him.

She had had a delightful day, and would he come soon again?

After dark, Mammy Betsy brought an open note to Vera. She had found it on the walk between the house and the stable, where Dr. Terry had helped put up Vera's pony. At first Vera hesitated to read it, but her eye caught a remark in it that impelled her.—It read as follows:

"Dear Glenn, Old Boy:

"Your recent note at hand.—You are a worthy son of Judge Terry, and more clever than I took you for, though I always rated you *A No. 1.* Indeed, if you land this western virgo, the combined fortunes of your respective dads will make you quite an American prince. As you say, 'love' is a means, not an end, and an ambitious young physician may dispense with the finer sentiments in the name of practical horse-sense. Don't let breaking off with your Denver fiance worry you over much. Glad you find this new lass interesting, and an easy mark. Here's good luck!—You bet I'll dance at your wedding!

Thanks for your confidence. I'm *mum* to the grave.

Yours, as in the old college days,

Tim."

When Vera had read these lines, she went to her room,

placed the note in a secret drawer of her dresser, threw herself on the bed, and wept bitterly.

Late the same evening, when Mr. Pickett had finished his work at his den, he sat back in his chair and looked up at the wall before him. There hung the clarinet, and above it the thirty-eight. To him there was a symbolism in these two instruments: one, of a peaceful art, the other of the art of strife.—He did not select the clarinet that night, but took down the revolver, examined the magazine, and began brushing up the parts.

"He got the wrong dog!" he repeated, and as he sat in thought, a strange premonition of evil came over him.

"There is no peace!" he muttered gloomily.

He had never carried a weapon on his person, since coming in from the West. He was a respecter of the law. —Now he dropped the gun into his hip pocket.

Chapter VIII.

THE RACK.

Dr. Terry's assistant met him at the office door on his return from the ride. There was a call in behalf of a prominent citizen, a friend of the doctor's. A serious case. The doctor to take the patient, for a difficult operation, to a specialist at the University Hospital at Ann Arbor the following morning. It was imperative that he

should go along as aid. He left his office in charge of his assistant, who marvelled that his young chief, who was generally so cool in a crisis, this time appeared nervous and distracted.

A dangerous operation was performed the following day. The patient was at death's door. In his moments of consciousness it was the presence of Dr. Terry, in whom he had great confidence, that buoyed the man up in his struggle for life. The young physician saw that even in the most favorable event, he could not leave the patient for a week to come.

On the evening of the second day, in a moment of respite, he sat down and penned the following words:

"Ann Arbor, July—, '14.

"My dear Miss Pickett:

I was called to an operation on a friend of mine at the U. of M. Hospital and will be detained here for a week.

"To have declared myself to you as I did, to have received only the first indefinite word of your reply, and now to be prevented by this extraordinary duty from seeing you for days, with this great uncertainty on my mind —to me this is supreme torture.

"I cannot conceive that we should have been interrupted at that moment, so sacred and portentous to me, intentionally, for I have been conscious of your father's good will.

"Yet now it appears as though, in the promise of your eyes, I had caught one view of bright heaven, and that

by an accident the gates had as suddenly closed.—Is the simile true?

"If it were not for the intense application this serious case demands of me (my friend's life has been pending by a thread ever since the operation) I might not bear the strain of this uncertainty, but should be on the next car for Detroit. My duty here both detains and saves me.

"Meanwhile, let me repeat simply: I love you with all my heart and soul!

"I ask no reply to my proposal by letter, but only a friendly word of encouragement, if I've a right to it, to lighten this for me till I see you again and obtain your decision from your own lips.

"Till that day, I remain yours in devotion and deep anxiety of heart,

Glenn Terry."

A week of hard work, never abating tension, and little sleep followed. At the end of that time the patient was out of danger. On the same day Dr. Terry's letter returned to him—unopened!

"You've saved my life, but you're 'all in' yourself," said his friend in grateful solicitude.

"See that you get out of here in another week, and don't worry about me," reproached the doctor and successfully forced a laugh that relieved the anxiety of his patient.

Then he hastened to catch the next Limited for Detroit, his throbbing, feverish brain almost stunned by this last pang of a week of overwork and torture.

Chapter IX.

WHY DO YOU LEAVE ME?

The sudden determination of Vera Pickett to go to Europe with her friend, Ethel Culver, for the remainder of the summer, was a surprise to her friends. Though urged, some time ago, by Mr. Calvert and Miss Pomeroy, who was abroad, to take up a course in music with teachers at Paris and Vienna, she had preferred to spend the summer at home and rest for college in the fall.

Now, in a twinkling, she had decided otherwise, and Mr. Pickett had consented. She had not been looking well. He noticed she was keeping some mental distress from him and he could only surmise what it might be. He did not question her further, trusting that she had chosen the right remedy in her decision to go abroad. He would run over to get her in the fall, and before their return they would make a tour of southern Europe. They had been across several years before, and the trip would be no experiment.

So while Dr. Terry was hastening toward Detroit with heavy heart, an animated group of people were gathered in the huge waiting room of the Michigan Central depot of that city.

There were Vera Pickett and Ethel Culver in traveling dress and, hovering about them, bombarding them with a veritable confetti shower of farewell advice, admonition and good wishes, stood the inner circle of their friends. There were the Messrs. Calvert and Beffel and

more of the musical associates, among them Lisette and Berthold, and last but not least, there was Mammy Betsy, in her black silk dress and white lace bonnet, her faithful old eyes ever seeking her young mistress, as though they would absorb enough of her to last for the time of her absence. Although every once in a while the white handkerchief would steal to her eyes, the old woman was smiling as she looked on and made affectionate remarks to "Vera, honey."

While, for a moment, the attention of the company was centered in Miss Culver, Vera and Lisette slipped away and promenaded up and down the corridor.

"Your last chance, Lisette!" said Vera to the little French girl. "Better come along. My offer to pay your fare is still good."

"I'll never forget your kindness; but I would not leave Berthold now for anything on earth."

"Would he give up such a chance for you?"

"Oui! I'm sure. I know of an instance when he did!"

"You're absolutely sure of his love?"

"You yourself published his musical confession of it! He and I sing it, whistle it, play it, dance it, dream it, and the royalties, of which he made me a present, keep me at Ypsi!"

"But if he turns——"

"Traitor," completed Lisette. "Good!—a breach of promise suit—a phonograph in the court room—selection, 'Lisette'—the judge weeps for 'Lisette'—Lisette wins the suit—all the newspapers publish 'Lisette'—all the world whistles 'Lisette'—Berthold, overwhelmed by 'Lisette'

falls into the arms of Lisette—tableau!"

And the way she acted this little sketch!—Vera hugged her and laughed. "Happy innocence with a perfect baby-faith in a man!"

Lisette looked the part and hummed with a pretty French cadence and ingenue gestures, the words from Godard's Florian's Song:

> "'Oh! c'est bien lui, randez le moi!
> J'ai son amour, il a ma foi!'"

"That settles it!" laughed Vera. "When's the wedding?"

"Some time in fall."

"Yet—if ever he should shake that faith, come to Paris by next boat!" persisted Vera. "They say it's a safe hospital for the disillusioned!"

"'J'ai son amour, il a ma foi!'" repeated the unperturbed Mademoiselle, and as they re-entered the waiting room, they were humming "Lisette" in unison.

Back in the crowd some one was asking: "Where's Dr. Terry?"

"Search me!" grunted Beffel.

Mr. Pickett, after the last details of checking baggage, came up, looking at his watch.

"Fifteen minutes!" he announced.

Then the grand leave-taking, Beffel starting them all singing:

> "Befo' you gits to de jumpin'-off place,
> "Come back to me, ma honey!"

Mr. Pickett and Mr. Calvert went along to the train,

to accompany the two tourists as far as New York.

Betsy was brave at the station, but once in the taxi, she buried her old wrinkled face in her handkerchief and saw nothing more of the world till she stepped out upon the bungalow veranda. She was "plumb out o' whack wid a case o' black anticipation!" she declared to a neighbor.

*** Sam Blake was looking out of the window of a corner cigar store, when he saw Dr. Terry step from the Ann Arbor interurban, the gloom in his heart written in his face, the afternoon paper projecting from his pocket.—Sam Blake had also read the item of the departure of Vera, in the paper, and he said to himself, as he watched the young man enter his office in the manner of one entering a dungeon: "It was a crude, old-fashioned trick, but it worked. It's only a starter, but it will hold them for a while."

Chapter X.

THE FURIES.

The first week of August, 1914!

"Fire!" sounded the alarm, and a peacefully dreaming world awoke to find every continent of the planet aflame. The magic word had been spoken that transformed millions of orderly citizens into nationally organized savages.

All the earth trembled beneath the stress of suddenly conjured and unpent international rage.

In a twinkling, millions of former friends were arrayed against each other for mutual destruction. But a moment ago all civilization gaily courting life with its thousand newly invented pleasures; now of a sudden a wild tango with death! "Dying a specialty" might have been placarded everywhere.

What a grand bluff had been all the late pretenses of civilization at humanity and Christianity!

The internationally beloved Jean Jaures of France was assassinated. The Internationals of Europe became patriots again, as by the wave of a wand. Frenchmen, Germans, Englishmen, Russians, Austrians,—all bonds of amity that had been created between them by years of peaceful intercourse were now as though they had not been. Even ties of blood were nought. All was null but nationality! Kindly men and women everywhere, who before had wept at the suffering of even a brute, were openly wishing death and destruction to the nation opposed to them.

Truly the powers of hell a la Sherman, had been unleashed. In the countries involved it became a crime to speak, rationally, a good word for the nation suddenly declared an enemy. Hate, absolute hate, became not only a duty, but an actual military necessity, as indispensible as effective ordnance and efficient battalions. Criminal slander in word and printed page became a patriotic virtue.

Hail chaos!

The citizen of the respective countries remained the

same average citizen. He had done nothing to forfeit his right to life and happiness; but to make it appear logical to kill him, he had to be made out a foreign monster, a fiend, in the eyes of one's own fellow saints. The lie, as a war asset, now flourished and multiplied into the millions, and all the minor million falsehoods were founded on the basic lie contained in every declaration of war, in every sword wielded, in every shot fired, namely the insane lie that one's own nation has a right to live and prosper while the other nation deserves death and ruin.

And to make of every soldier—Gaul, Briton, Teuton, or Slav—a raving terror, a superdreadnaught in the fray, he was promised, by his government, a badge of honor, in form of a Christian cross (the irony of it!) for special bravery in action!

There ever will be but one kind of war!

One of the signs of the times was the decree, written or unwritten, issued by several belligerents, forbidding the production of operas and other musical works of foreign composers, knowing very well that their production would diminish the international hate so necessary to feed the war flame. Orpheus was exiled, by order of Mars! He must not, as of old, be permitted to descend into hades and subdue the furies.

Consternation in the United States, the great nation composed of the not yet amalgamated elements from all the nations at war! Then the word went forth: "Let us be neutral!" but it was a futile cry. The only strict neutrals among live men and women of all the land were possibly those in solitary confinement in the penitentiaries.

The process of the "melting pot" was dangerously in-

terrupted. The concoction was again disintegrating into its elements. And these elements, estranged, still bound to remain contiguous. What would come of it?

Most men at once proceeded to appoint themselves attorneys for the warring nations they favored and made out a clean case for their side, with a formidable, non-controvertible array of "pros" and an elimination or denial of all "cons."

From day to day men and women here, as in the countries at war, held their breath and were swayed by hopes and fears, as the news favored first one side, then the other.

The "war-fans," the modern replica of the spectators of the Roman gladiatorial contests (who may say he was not one of them?) also flourished, watched the bloody sport through the press at a safe distance, with morbid glee and "bet their bloody sestertii."

*** Had it been blood that counted now, Mr. Pickett and Dr. Terry were two men who should have had reasons to be impartial. Mr. Pickett's forefathers on his father's side were French, and on his mother's German; Glenn Terry's paternal ancestors were English and his maternal ancestors Austrians.

Both of these men had been buried deep in their work for the past week, Mr. Pickett in order to be able to leave for Europe in the fall, the doctor in order to become master of his humiliation and heartache.

At first the young man had striven and raged. Before the steamer departed, he had telegraphed to a florist he knew in New York and had ordered a costly bouquet of orchids sent Vera aboard ship. There had been no ac-

knowledgment. His mad fancy followed the ship, as it were, by aeroplane and wireless, and inquired: "Why do you leave me?" But as the days went by, he calmed down to his work.

When the war furies broke their tethers in Europe, the first thought of both these men was "Vera!—Vera in the midst of the conflagration!"

Mr. Pickett had received a letter from Paris. Vera and her friends were well, and happy to be where so much of the "universal tongue" was spoken! Surely more than the grand pantomimes of the ancient Romans it was, in the great opera houses, frequented by tourists from all over the globe, making all human hearts to beat in unison. Nations could not sing each other's songs and still hate one another. The whole letter breathed self-elimination and enthusiasm for the most divine of the arts.

The day before the declaration of war at Vienna, Dr. Terry happened to think of the words of Mr. Pickett, uttered during that country ride: "The record of the other dog is at Harper Hospital." He hastened to the hospital at his first leisure moment, looked over the register and talked with nurses and physicians who had attended Sam Blake after his accident. They told him of certain utterances of this man while delirious, which were a mystery to them but a revelation to Dr. Terry. After the visit, the doctor hastened to his office and penned a letter to his father in Denver.

He had scarcely finished and mailed it, when the office boy announced a negro woman. One of his poor charity patients, thought Dr. Terry and had him admit her.

Surprised to see Betsy, he greeted her heartily, though

his hope that there might be a happy message was dispelled by the ominous—if comical—look and the actual white heat of the eyeballs beneath Betsy's dark brows.

Betsy had been favorably impressed by the doctor from the first time she met him at the bungalow, and had always treated him very kindly, though she had the privilege of lord high executioner in the household.

"Well, what can I do for you, Aunt Betsy?"

Betsy took from her pocket a folded note and handed it to him.

"Dr. Terry, somebody what kin read, tol' me dat yo' name on top'n dat letta."

The doctor glanced at the note.

"My first name, Glenn, yes," he said.

"Dey be some mischief in dat 'are letta. It done plumb upsets Miss Vera. I knows it done make her go across de big wata.—Doc', if you's de miscreum what done played de hoodoo, you deserves to be plugged, fo' de divelmint, an' a—a knows who'll do de pluggin'."

Dr. Terry read the note hastily, in surprise and disgust. The expression of his face pleased and relieved Betsy.

"Who's 'Tim'?" He looked up at Betsy. "Yes, the fellow who wrote this ought to be shot, and probably will be. Where did you find it?"

"In de garden, dat evenin' you an' Miss Vera come back from dat ar' ride. Miss Vera read it, dat's what she done, an' de hoodoo worked. A found it where she been hidin' it."

"Betsy, may I have this note?"

"What you specs to do wid it?"

"Hand it to Mr. Pickett."

She looked him straight in the eye. "Cross yo' heart?"

He did so, to satisfy her.

"Dat de propa t'ing fo' to do," she said with confidence. "It's yo' note."

"Thank you, Betsy."

*****And now "hell" had broken loose in Europe, and this little trick of some hidden enemy was responsible for Vera's being in it.

Chapter XI.

HEARTS AND CANNONS.

While the newsboys all over the city were shouting the latest scare lines of the war extras, a lull fell over the "little Hague." Neighbors, otherwise so talkative and cordial, hardly knew what to say to one another. All accepted the situation over in Europe reluctantly. They had grown so cosmopolitan, so accustomed to regard each other as belonging to one relationship, that they could and would not understand. The shock of the war-declaration was painful to all and as they got their bearings they heartily expressed their regrets to one another.

When the newspapers started to publish exaggerated accounts, in which the warring nations accused each other of unspeakable atrocities, the extras ceased to come into

the settlement. There was no boasting, jeering or exulting in victories—the natural sympathies for the kin across the water were there but pride and hatred were not in evidence.

At the next orchestra meeting Mr. Pickett addressed the cosmopolitan membership seriously, urging them not to be influenced by the mad passions unnaturally aroused in their respective native countries; to consider that their children and children's children would some day, forgetting their origin, be joint heirs of the American republic, that the bonds of friendship and interest which had united this settlement were more potent and real than those of blood and kin.

He announced that his worry about his daughter prompted him to leave for Europe in a few days, and that he would leave it to them to choose their leader during his absence.

The members adopted resolutions reiterating the sentiment of this address, and elected their temporary director.

After the rehearsal, while Berthold and Lisette were seated in the front room of the girl's home, Berthold remarked:

"There's only one thing that would drive me over there to fight with the men of my race."

"And what is that, Berthold?"

"The worst thing that could happen: if you should go back on me——!"

"Then, Berthold, I'll surely prove a loyal Frenchwoman and deprive the 'enemy' of one brave recruit!"

And she laughed again, in her lighthearted, Gallic way

and hummed the "J'ai son amour il a ma foi", and when Berthold caught her up in his arms, they waltzed about the room together like two children, innocent of the pride and hatred of the megalomaniac tribes of earth.

And from that day he grew ever more tender toward her, and more than ever did they try to lighten each other's hearts by banter and song, and they spread the happy infection throughout the settlement.

However, there remained one element in the "little Hague" that was not so easily controlled. It was the "young idea," the youngsters whom Dr. Terry had marveled at in their baseball game. After the appearance of some very yellow war-headlines in the paper, one evening, there had been boasts and challenges, and in a moment the little squad were mixed up in a desperate scrimmage. There were bleeding noses and blackened eyes before their elders appeared on the scene.

A sound spanking by—and with—the "general staff" of each household, however, put an end even to this juvenile feud, and international arbitration, permanent peace and good will were assured in the "little Hague."

Chapter XII.

THERE IS NO PEACE.

It was the evening before Mr. Pickett's proposed de-

parture for Europe. His business affairs had been given into the hands of a competent friend and matters at the bungalow set in order for the closing of the place, while Betsy would stay with relatives in Kentucky. Mr. Pickett had made a last visit to the "little Hague" and was motoring back toward Woodward.

As he neared the heart of the city, he felt a desire for that peculiar rest to the troubled brain which one enjoys when looking out upon a calm body of water.

He parked his machine and walked toward the river, across the railroad yards that intervened. A cool, refreshing breeze from the stream met him, and he sat down on a pile of ties and looked across the water.—Would it were the only body of water between him and his child!

They were recruiting men for the great war within a mile of where he stood; the octopus had stretched one of his arms across the wide ocean. The thought made the danger to Vera seem but the more imminent.

A monstrous freighter was passing, its silhouette against the lights of Windsor seeming to reach over half the width of that Canadian city. It was quiet, and he could hear the noise of her propeller and the command of her captain; then the snort and the rumble of an approaching freight train up the yard drowned these sounds, and the same vessel seemed floating down stream, a phantom ship with no machinery and crew, her bow and stern lights hovering above her like will-o'-the-wisps.

The noisy freight train came on. Just as the caboose went crashing by, Mr. Pickett heard a dull report and at the same instant felt a sharp pain in his left leg. He tried to spring up, but the left limb would not serve him, and

he fell forward. Then another report, and something whistling by, very close to his head.

With the quick impulse of the frontiersman his eye sought the spot whence the reports came, while his hand sped to his hip pocket. At a distance of some fifteen yards his eye caught, in the dim ray of the rear lights of the passing freight, a hand pointing a pistol toward him. The rest of the man was hidden in the dark shadow of a box car on a siding.

Then another flash from the pistol and another bullet whistling by; but before this could be repeated again, his own weapon had spoken, and above the noise of the disappearing freight he heard the thud of a falling object and the sound of rapidly retreating footsteps.

"I knew you were prowling. Thought I was unarmed, did you?—Not yet!—There's a crippled hand and a pistol for evidence."

A patrolman, who had heard the shots, appeared on the scene. Mr. Pickett, still lying on the ground and now suffering severe pain, explained in a few words. The officer found a pistol and bloodstains beside the box car. Assistance came, and Mr. Pickett was given first aid and hurried by ambulance to the hospital.

****** Dr. Terry had tried, unsuccessfully, for several days, to get an interview with Mr. Pickett. Now, arriving at Harper Hospital in response to an emergency call, he was surprised to find it was from the man he was anxiously seeking.

"You, Mr. Pickett! What has happened?" he exclaimed, in alarm.

"There is no peace!" replied the other, his face drawn

in pain. "All men on earth are simply reservists, potential warriors, liable to be called to the colors at any moment. War is declared in Europe, and my own little feud has at last broken out. This is the popping up of the bogy that I've been keeping down with a hobby. See what you can do for me. A poor shot! He meant to finish me and dump me into the river for a 'suicide'."

Mr. Pickett was growing pale from pain and loss of blood. Dr. Terry prepared to probe the wound.

"Who did this?" demanded the doctor.

"I'll tell you later. The police will also want to know. Go ahead," and the man set his teeth for the ordeal.

The bullet had entered below the knee, cut a ligament, shattered the bone and lodged in the muscle. The operation was performed immediately, under an anaesthetic. When the patient regained consciousness, his first anxious question was:

"How soon will I be able to travel?"

Dr. Terry shook his head.

"Im sorry, Mr. Pickett, but you'll not be able to walk on that leg for several months."

Despair was in Mr. Pickett's eyes. The doctor tried to persuade him to rest, but he would speak in spite of all.

"My God! Do you mean that?—And Vera over in that inferno! I've had no word from her for some days though I've cabled.—Young man, I must go—if on crutches!"

"Impossible! for a month, at least."

"That may be too late."

The doctor stood for some time in silence, looking out of the window, then he turned and said gravely, look-

ing straight into the stricken man's eyes:

"Would I do, Mr. Pickett?"

There was less surprise than affection and anxiety in Mr. Pickett's eyes.

"Your practice!"

"I have an able assistant."

Mr. Pickett hesitated, then said kindly: "Dr. Terry, what disturbance came between you and Vera recently?"

The young man handed him the note Betsy had given him.

"This trick.—I've been trying to hand it to you for several days."—He told Betsy's story.—"It seems to have fulfilled its purpose."

Mr. Pickett read it hastily. The color came back to his pallid face and he began to laugh. "So he took a chance, and made a hit!"

"Who?"

"I'll tell you.——The same man wrote that note who shot me, and to the same purpose. It was to his interest to estrange you and Vera, as it was to put me out of the way."

"Who on earth—?"

"Sam Blake of Denver."

"Sam Blake! What object?—My God, you—are you—?"

"Horace Garrett of Denver!"

There were no attendants present just then. Dr. Terry sank on one knee, reached across the bed covers and grasped the hand of the patient eagerly.

"Horace Garrett!" he cried, "the man who—saved my father from execution! The best friend we children at

home ever had!—I can see it all now. I heard of Blake's involuntary confession, while the fever was on him, at the hospital.—I see it all now!"

"It's well you heard of the confession.—No more of it at present! Glenn—my little Glenn! I loved you when you were a foot high, and I'm sure neither you nor I have changed at heart!"

The man had weakened from the severe wound and the operation, and his emotions got the best of him. His eyes filled with tears. The doctor gazed at him in affection and wonder.

"Yes, Glenn, *you'll do*, since you say I cannot go. But you must go quickly. Your assistant can take care of me. Get your passports and lose no time. I'll give you her last addresses. And take that art along with you—your marksmanship. I'm glad your father trained you to it. He and I were the crack shots out there in our day. It may come handy if you should find Vera among the wolves.—Blake might have been a good target for a shooting match, but the police will spoil that for us now!—By the way" and he smiled queerly, "what conversation between you and the girl did I interrupt out there on the country road?"

The young man was somewhat taken aback, but replied frankly: "Telling her that I love her, of course, and proposing marriage—and you came along and deliberately spoiled my chance!"

The patient laughed as heartily as his condition would permit.

"I thought as much!—Glad to hear it, Glenn. If it had not been for that man's betraying himself, I, still a

'fugitive from justice', should have had to prevent any nearer acquaintance between you and Vera,—but now—God bless you! Yet I thought a little obstacle would be wholesome—a father's solicitude—a little more time for reflection; and now I'm sorry I interrupted. See what mischief it has done.—I think Vera would have accepted you, and then she should have been obliged, the next day, to flash that note into your face, you should have passed muster, and there should have been no hurt feelings and no European trip. As the matter is, her pride forbade her mentioning the note even to me. You never would have had a chance to make excuses."

"I'll risk my life a hundred times to undo this, to find Vera and, if possible to win her."

"Go ahead, Glenn, I think you'll win."

"Does Vera love Mr. Calvert?" said the doctor, abruptly.

"He proposed to her on the way to New York, but was not accepted. When his former charmer, Miss Pomeroy, returns from Europe, he'll get over it."

Here the doctor had to bid the stricken man rest for the night, for the strain was becoming too great for even a man of his iron constitution.

"Remember, I'm still Mr. Pickett in Detroit, for the present," the patient warned, as the doctor left the room.

Before retiring, Glenn Terry wrote a long letter to his father in Denver.—Three days later, he was able to leave Mr. Pickett to his assistant and set out on his trip to Paris and—the war.

Mr. Garrett handed him a letter to Vera in a plain, unsealed envelope. "This will explain it all to her," he said.

"Bring back my little girl, Glenn. My life depends on it!"

"Mine as well, Mr. Garrett!"

Chapter XIII.

THE METEOR AND THE MAGAZINE.

Vera Pickett and Ethel Culver had been in Paris with their friend, Miss Pomeroy, but a few days, having made appointments to begin their studies with the Parisian tutor two weeks later. Miss Pomeroy having obtained leave from her teacher, the three decided to attend the grand opera at Bayreuth.

It was on the third evening of their attendance. They had entered deeply into the spirit of the festival. After a pleasant ocean voyage, Vera was quite herself again and now, in this temple of all the muses, experienced that sweet mental exaltation which the combination of the "sister arts" in grand opera masterpieces imparts with irresistible power.

The magnificent opera house, built by the munificence of that lavish royal patron of Wagner, was filled almost to the doors with an audience composed of Germans, Englishmen, Frenchmen, Austrians, Americans,—possibly of representatives of every civilized nation. They were all here to enjoy the works of the great dramatist-composer,

without particular thought or feeling about his nationality. He was one of them, as great painters, sculptors, and composers the world over are of us—the best of us, personal friends of all who comprehend them, regardless of nationality.

A few days before, Vera had seen a somewhat similar audience in Paris, sitting at the feet of French and Italian masters, paying them that same universal tribute. There was little evidence of "patriotism" in those audiences. A month later, she expected to have the same experience and behold the same spectacle in Vienna, and later, after her father's arrival, in Venice, Milan, and London.

"Father is right," thought the girl, as she sat entranced by the magnificent performance. "If anything will persuade the nations to recognize their kinship, it surely is what he calls the "universal tongue," music!

The performance was nearing its height. Schumann-Heink, so familiar to the three girls from their American concert attendance, had just appeared in her dramatic role. A peaceful scene was now on, the orchestra playing very softly. The audience seemed holding their breath in silent admiration.

At this moment a faint, discordant sound disturbed Vera's reverie. It was a low murmur, not of approval or criticism of anything occurring on the stage. She looked about the auditorium; nothing seemed to have happened there to cause the disturbance.

The murmuring gradually grew louder, nearer, more general. Now it sounded to Vera like the ominous rustling of the forest before the sudden breaking of a midsummer storm. She glanced back over the tiers of seats

and along the boxes. There was restless fluttering as of poplar foliage, a turning of heads and anxious expressions in the faces. Men were leaving the auditorium, especially from the boxes, quietly, but with an ominous, nervous step and a mysterious, determined expression on their faces.

"What's the matter?" asked Miss Pomeroy.

"This building is fireproof," replied Miss Culver, reassuringly.

The chaperon who had accompanied them and who sat next to Vera, was listening intently, and as the advance ripple of the tide of subdued voices touched the row of seats back of them, she grew pale as death and whispered to the girls:

"La guerre!—Krieg!—War!"

"War between whom?—Where?" queried the girls anxiously and in unison.

"Russia, Austria, Germany, France—all Europe, I'm afraid," said the chaperon, who was politically a well-informed woman. "The floodgates are opened at last. The entire tide will flow through."

"War!" at such a moment as this?—If the earth had gaped wide and swallowed the magnificent stage picture before them, Vera could not have been more surprised and dismayed. She could not realize it. But a moment ago all hearts had beaten in one accord, through the influence of "the universal tongue," and now this consternation and confusion of Babel!

So it was all a magnificent cardboard structure, this grand civilization of Europe, the nerve-centre of the globe!—Was the delusion possible? Had Europe tired

of her splendor and refinement and was she deliberately destroying the card-house, to return to the primitive and have the child-pleasure of re-building?

"What shall we do?"

They were interrupted by the execution of the grand climax of the act, and the curtain was rung down with a stupendous finale, brought to a close by the blare of trumpets and crash of timpani.

The effect on such an audience ordinarily would have been electrifying, but now the applause was but weak. Heart and hand seemed half paralyzed. There was a stir and a moving toward the doors.

"They are leaving the theatre. Let us go," said Miss Pomeroy.

"Stay," advised Vera, "at least through another act. Let us not be afraid. Perhaps there will be an announcement that will help us meet the situation."

The chaperon and the two other girls agreed. Most of the audience remained in their seats.

When the curtain rose again, the soloists and chorus were visibly perturbed. Singing and acting became inferior, and the concentrated attention of the audience, which before had spurred the performers to achieve their best, was gone. The very air in the auditorium seemed laden with a menace. At the end of the act the three girls and the chaperon, with one impulse, arose and joined in the now almost general exodus to the street.

There the scene was confusion. People were talking excitedly in different languages, gesticulating wildly and rushing for vehicles.

Everyone seemed surprised and dumbfounded!

Surprised!—Had not Europe been one great powder magazine for years, But who lit the fuse?—In a few days each government would be pointing its finger at the other, and each one would cry in horror: "God forbid! Not I!" All had sown the dragon's teeth—but who had called forth the harvest of giants? All had sown the wind—but who had stirred up the whirlwind? All had helped inflate the great bubble—but who had pricked the film?

Verily! What else could have struck the European powder magazine but a chance meteor from the deep blue sky! What but a meteor!

*** The four women took a taxi to their hotel.

"This is horrible!" remarked Miss Pomeroy.

"Will it upset all our plans?" asked Miss Culver, naively.

Vera, in all her seriousness, could not suppress a laugh. "It might!"

"Are they really going to fight?—Whole armies of them?"

"Millions!" answered the chaperon.

"Then we'd better hie us back to Paris and little old America!"

"That's the only thing to do," decided Miss Pomeroy.

Vera made no comments. When they arrived at the hotel, she noticed that they were being watched, and it occurred to her that in all the belligerent countries there would be a wild campaign against spies.

They hastened to register with the police. It was well they had American passports.

But back to Paris and their baggage they must go at once. They inquired about the morning trains but were in-

formed that all regular traffic was held up for the present, as trains were being commandeered for the transportation of troops to the frontier.

Those were days of sore trial for the young women. To forget their own worries, they would go to the station and see the troop trains leaving for the front, hear the singing of patriotic hymns, (what elemental, maddening accents the "universal tongue" had suddenly acquired!) behold the young warriors waving last farewells and then, when the train had rushed out, see the group of dazed, fear-haunted mothers, wives, and sweethearts returning to their homes, made desolate even by this first call to arms.

Ever the ancient story of Hector and Andromache over again!

Vera had grown very serious and non-communicative. She expressed no anxiety or desire to return home. Cable communication having been severed between Grmany and America, she wrote several letters to her father. These were delayed in the interrupted mail service and did not reach her father for several weeks.

Before arrangements could be made for a return to Paris, the first wounded soldiers, German, French and Belgian, had been returned from the front.

*** Then it was that she made up her mind quickly. She had, from the start, firmly determined not to return to America before fall. The secret cause of her coming and her pride forbade it. But to pursue her intended studies amid the miseries of this war was also impossible for one of her disposition. There was but one course for her to pursue, and all the anxious pleading of her two

girl friends could not dissuade her. On the day of their departure for Paris and the States, she left for Munich. having applied for a position as assistant to the nurses of the Red Cross hospital there.

Chapter XIV.

IN THE SAME CAUSE.

It has been the course of the militarism of modern nations to invent an "irresistible" projectile, then an "impenetrable" armor plate that will resist the irresistible, then a still more irresistible projectile that will pierce the impenetrable, etc., ad infinitum!

When Dr. Terry arrived at Paris, conditions there were approaching those of a panic. The new giant guns of the foe were reducing the fortresses of Belgium, supposed to be impregnable. The last "irresistible" projectile had arrived just in time to do its execution before the next "impenetrable" could be invented by the opponent; and the possibility of an investment of the capital became apparent.

The doctor found the former apartments of Vera and her companions. The landlady was all upset and about to leave for the South.—Yes, the three had lodged there, had left on a trip shortly before the outbreak of the war, two of them had returned recently and left for Calais and

America, because of this *grande malheur*; but Mademoiselle Pickett had remained somewhere, she did not know where, to nurse soldiers, and had sent word to store her trunk till her return.

He hastened to Calais. The boat on which Miss Pomeroy and Miss Culver had taken passage, was gone. He hurried back to Paris. The landlady and her household were gone and the house closed. He went to the headquarters of the American Red Cross and made inquiries there, without results. However, he met an American friend, a Dr. Griffith of New York, who gave him letters of introduction to several prominent French surgeons stationed near the front.

Then began a difficult search back of the firing line of the Allied armies, a search without a clue to follow, and fraught with annoyances, difficulties and dangers without number. With the French gendarmes policing that vast region, ever suspicious of espionage, his poor French parlance, passports, and letters were not always satisfactory, and he spent several uncomfortable days and nights under guard among other suspects, at one time being even treated to the gruesome spectacle of one of his former fellowprisoners being shot before his eyes in the courtyard of the prison. Justice—and injustice— were swift in those days. He knew from day to day that he himself, prying as he was into affairs near the front, was not safe during the mad excitement of the time.

Often he heard stories of field hospitals being destroyed by chance shots from long range batteries, and surgeons and nurses being killed. He shuddered at each such report. What if Vera were among the unfortunates!

Almost exhausted by a long, fruitless search, having managed to escape, largely by the aid of a liberal purse, all its grave dangers, he finally returned to the Red Cross headquarters.

"Going to give it up and return to Detroit?" asked Dr. Griffith, sympathetically.

"Not in a thousand years!" was the determined reply.

"Better join us and go to the front. It will be the surest way to find the lady—or live a thousand years—providing the shrapnel does not get you! God knows, we need surgeons of your skill. Many hundreds are dying in agony for the want of surgical aid."

"I'm not deaf to that appeal," said Dr. Terry, "but my first duty is to find Miss Pickett. However, since, as you say, I may find her best by enlisting as a surgeon—I'm your man."

Chapter XV.

A WHIFF OF "HELL."

A field hospital in northern France, in October, 1914. Army headquarters but a mile away. A captive baloon hovering in the zenith, and aeroplanes, the modern scouts, winging their way out over the enemy's trenches.

A fierce battle raging all along the front. Incessant booming of heavy field artillery and the rattle of machine

guns and rifles. On the road to the right a column of reserves marching, at double quick, to the firing line, banners flying, music playing; singing and cheering.

"Alons enfants, de la patrie!
Le jour de gloire est arrive!"

In another direction a troop of cavalry, resting their horses in the shelter of a grove, nervously awaiting orders, while a battery thunders by them to take up its position, as the brains of the army has ordered.

All these activities, directed ahead, manifestations of the lust of battle, the determination to conquer.

But still another procession is moving in the opposite direction, from firing line to field hospital: the procession of ambulances filled with wounded and dying.

This a manifestation of the heavy price being paid, of the partial defeat that even the conqueror admits.

The roar of the cannon and rattle of infantry fire grows from minute to minute. In every direction can be seen the flames and smoke of villages, fired by bombs. The battle is developing into one of the most desperate of the campaign. From the commanders of the ambulances comes the call, in French: "They are falling by the thousands over there. The poor fellows must be cared for. We must have more men!"

Dr. Terry was in that hospital. He had been at the operation table all day, employing his skill, in the gruesome task of field surgeon, on mangled human flesh and bone.

He had just been relieved for a much-needed rest, when he heard the call for help. An auto ambulance near-

by was without a surgeon. He leaped into it, and the officer gave the signal to go ahead. With a bound the machine started along the rough country road, headed directly for a town whence clouds of smoke were rising in ever greater volumes. Here and there above them, birds, singly and in flocks, scared out of their habitations, were flying wildly toward them. On the road, they met old men, women and children, with terror written on their faces, fleeing with whatever they could carry with them, some in vehicles, most of them afoot. The doctor's gaze missed none. What if Vera were among them!

Now they could hear the loud reports of bursting shells in the town, and the crash of collapsing masonry. O God! If Vera were there!

"We are going into the bowels of hell!" said the officer to Dr. Terry.

"I'll stay with the rig," said the doctor, calmly.

As if in reply, a terrific explosion was heard ahead. An ammunition depot had been struck by a shell, and the explosion had torn up the greater part of a block, a quarter of a mile away. Pieces of debris were falling all about them.

The enemy seemed to be concentrating all his heavy fire on this town. As they entered the main street, bombs and shrapnel were bursting everywhere, filling the air with clouds of dust and stifling fumes. The top of a steeple crashed into the court before them. Signal officers fell with it to their death.

Mangled dead bodies everywhere.

"Alons enfants, de la patrie!"

Hurrah!—This was war again—war for the untold

thousandth time—the "surgery which might have been prevented by prophylaxis" as the doctor had said to Mr. Pickett in Detroit. But it had not been prevented, and pride of race and greed of commerce was practicing "remedial blood-letting" in the grand surgery of the howitzer and the Gatling gun.

For the moment, Dr. Terry himself was fully possessed of the fury of battle. He would he might leap out there into the trenches and employ his skill as a marksman against the enemy who was creating such havoc about him! He was a Frenchman, every fibre of him, at that moment, and felt the full meaning of the word "patriotism." Yes, it was natural and real, this battle fury, this patriotism gone mad, this willingness to die that one's nation might live and be glorified!

"Vive la republique!"

Then the thought again: What if Vera were in this town! A fig for republics and monarchies! What greater cause, what greater deed, what greater joy than rescuing her, the girl for whose sake all this hell about him was as a puppets' dance!

Officers and men were rushing by them, down the street, into the lanes. To one of them the chauffeur shouted: "Where are they?"

"Down there in yonder cellar—fifty of them!" was the reply.

Before a huge public building the ambulance was halted. The men sprang down the stairs, into the cellar. A chorus of groans and cries of agony greeted them. Without discrimination they took up the men, one at a time, and carried them to the ambulance, till it would hold

no more. One poor young mother's son expired in their arms on the way to the vehicle. He was dropped, to make room for one still alive.—A promise to the rest of the begging wretches in that dungeon of horrors, to return for them. Then away!

Just as they had wheeled about in the public square and started on their return, there was a terrific detonation. Dr. Terry sprang up and dropped his bandages. A glance showed him the mangled bodies of the chauffeur and the officer on the pavement. His own hat was blown off, and blood trickled down his temples. He leaped to the front seat. The machine was intact! Throwing it wide open, he drove on through the inferno of the streets and out along the country road, raked and plowed by shot and shell until, as by a miracle, he arrived without further mishap, at the field hospital. There he deposited his load of wounded amid the applause of his colleagues, and then, after having his own scalp wound dressed, tottered off to his quarters, where he fell into the deep sleep of total exhaustion, a sleep in which he heard again and again the piteous cries of Vera from amid the escenes of carnage he had just been through, but a sleep so profound that he did not hear the raging of one of the fiercest battles of the great war all about the cottage in which he lay.

When he finally awoke and stepped to the door, he noticed a sentry in gray uniform and helmet pacing up and down before it. Nearby a company in like attire were bivouacing.

The situation was plain to him in a moment. The position, including the field hospital, had been stormed by the enemy. He was a captive of the German army!

"And Vera over across the dead line, among the French!" thought he.

Chapter XVI.

IN SPITE OF WAR.

After several weeks' work in Munich, in which she made rapid progress in the art of caring for the wounded, Vera was permitted to accompany a corps of trained nurses to a hospital near the front. Her exceptional courage and skill as aid admitted her where otherwise one of her limited experience would have been excluded.

The hospital they now occupied was a large French château in that part of northern France then occupied by the German forces. Here were brought, from the various field hospitals in that district, the more or less severely wounded Germans, Frenchmen, Englishmen, Turcos, Senegalese and other citizen-soldiers and mercenaries of the armies struggling along the western front of the great pan-European battlefield.

Being but a volunteer assistant made the task no lighter for Vera. She never shirked when the gruesome ambulances arrived, and, after a few days' acquaintance, it seemed patients were forever calling for Miss, Fräulein, Mademoiselle, Signorina Pickett.

Her familiarity with French and German now proved

of great value. While most of the surgeons spoke the three languages, but few of the nurses did.

She became interpreter and letter writer to the wounded, and more than that in the convalescent wards. There the surgeons encouraged her and others of talent to give musicals from time to time, and the patients begged for them and thrived on them.

And amid all this, she ever remained the daughter of Armin Pickett, the man whose hobby was the "little Hague."

In a diary which she started at that time, she jotted down under the heading: "War is epidemic insanity!" the following notes:

"In ward one, side by side, a Scotchman and a German. Before the war, messmates for years on the same merchant vessels. Truest of friends. By a cruel coincidence they have wounded each other severely in a night bayonet melee. When found, they were bandaging each other's wounds.

"In ward three, two Austrians and a Frenchman. The Frenchman's son married to the daughter of one of the Austrians. The two Austrians implacable enemies in the courts, before the war.—The Austrian relative of the Frenchman has begged to have the Frenchman's cot placed between him and his former comrade in arms, for the sake of peace!

"In ward five, two Alsacian artillery officers, severely wounded. The one, a year ago, saved the life of the other's child at the risk of his own. When the war broke out, they enlisted, one with the Teuton, the other with the Gaul. 'I pray it was not shrapnel from my battery that

ripped off your leg!' said one of them today. 'Ditto!' groaned the other.

"In the same ward a German sergeant, who had been rescued from a shipwreck when an infant and adopted by a German family, has just been identified as the son of a British nobleman and heir to a large estate in England! He is experiencing a very violent revulsion of sentiment just now! Will he see the folly of it all and cry: 'Vanity, all is vanity!'

"A young French officer, full of banter, in spite of his severe wounds, said to me today: 'Mademoiselle, when I am well, will you marry me?' 'Why shouldn't I?' I said, to please his fancy. An hour later, he was dead from an operation.

"These soldiers of the first line were all stage-struck a few days ago. Today they are sobered. Their understudies are now beginning the same process in the trenches!

"War is here again, but isn't it nonsense? In the ranks these men are units of two deadly hostile machines; here they are again the baker and the candle-stick maker, with no personal feeling of enmity whatever.—Who manufactured the enmity for them?

"The horror of the operating room! Today several young men, in the flower of youth, torn by shells into such hideous abnormities that, if they survive, their own mothers cannot look upon them hereafter without abhorrence.

"That young master violinist, once the entertainer of thousands, now with his right arm shot off, has gone insane. The pity! I do not even know what uniform he wore. That does not concern me.

"The flower of the young generation expiring under the surgeons' knives or succumbing to the agonies of tetanus, blood poisoning and every conceivable complication! O these cries, night and day!

"Many lightly wounded will go back to the ranks, to be shot again, mended, returned, and shot again, until some merciful bomb takes their pretty heads off and breaks their mothers' hearts!

"I have not found a difference in the temperature of the tears of a German or Frenchman or the nervous system of an Englishman and that of an Austrian. Does it make any difference, after all, in what camp a bomb explodes? There is the same amount of undeserved pain."

*** It was on an evening of her second week at the hospital. She was leaving the wards for her apartments, after having just sung a young lieutenant to sleep—his *last* sleep—with the song his mother used to sing, and having written for him a last message to his people. The day had been crowded with gruesome incidents, and as she stepped out into the moonlight, her strong young nerves suddenly gave way, and, sitting down upon the stone steps that led to the driveway, she buried her face in her hands and gave way to a flood of hot tears.

The rumbling of a supply wagon prevented her hearing hasty steps and the clink of spurs on the pavement. She was startled from her pathetic relaxation by a deep though very kindly, masculine voice:

"Pardon, Fraülein!"

Looking up out of her tears, she was rather frightened and embarrassed to see a tall, athletic officer in gray uniform before her, with doffed helmet.

"Ah, it is you, Miss Pickett!" he continued, in good English, and then, with a reproachful smile: "You must not get into the path of the clumsy heavy artillery! I nearly ran over you, and I never would have forgiven myself!"

As Vera arose, he respectfully retreated a step, his helmet still in hand.

"I have not the honor—" she faltered.

"You must excuse me!" he interrupted her. "I have the honor of knowing you. The wounded Lieutenant Weber is a friend of mine. I have seen you on my visits to him. You have been very kind to my friend. I am Herbert Stauffer, Captain of Engineers, and Nurse Gerda is my sister."

"Ah Sister Gerda!—A splendid young woman!"

"Her brother thinks so!"

"I am much indebted to her for her kind instruction in the work."

"You are in some trouble, Miss Pickett. May I be of any assistance?"

"Thank you, Captain; none, whatever. This is the first time I have been—so tired."

He saluted and was about to proceed up the steps, but turned and said kindly, but with an authoritative firmness in his voice:

"Miss Pickett, I do not wish to seem importunate, but you are a stranger here. You are doing more than you ought among horrors that overtax the nerves of the strongest men. Somewhere there is someone—perhaps a parent—greatly concerned in your welfare. My mother has taken up her abode in a country house, a short drive

from here. She's the best woman on earth, and you may have music, books and many comforts of home there. She is a native of England, and I've spent a year at Oxford myself. Promise me that if you feel the need of a rest and recreation, you'll go with sister. There's an auto at your disposal."

There was that in his personality that compelled confidence, and in that moment of depression she was glad to accept so kind an invitation. She thanked him, and with a hearty: "Don't overdo again!" he disappeared in the hospital.

Chapter XVII.

WORD FROM HOME; AND A DREAM

It was several weeks after the meeting of Vera and the Bavarian engineer that the *feldpost* brought her the following letter from her father in Detroit:

"My dear Vera:

Your several letters, all arriving here on the same day, have relieved me of grave anxiety for your safety. It is surely noble in you to have joined the Red Cross, though I wish you had chosen to return with your friends. They were not able to give me any adequate reason for your remaining.

"I'm afraid the horrors of a war-hospital will be very hard even on your strong young nerves. Be very careful

not to overdo, nor to expose yourself needlessly to the dangers of this work. Remember you are all I have on earth.

"When the news of the declaration of war reached me, I would have come for you at once, but was prevented by peculiar circumstances, so I have sent a friend to bring you back, either free or in chains!—If you have any love or compassion for your father, come back with this friend!

"Betsy has lost ten pounds from worry, since she heard of the war. She doesn't see how they dared to start one while you are there—neither do I!—The rabbit's foot she slipped into your trunk helps some to quiet her. It's lucky she cannot read. My censorship of the war news I read to her is more thorough than that of London.

"We have had six weddings at the "little Hague" since you left! All 'international,' of course. So the little experiment works out well, in spite of the war. There will never be war in that square! Lisette and Berthold are among the 'newly weds'—happy as larks!—Pat McGrady married the little Musoff girl. He said to me he was 'willin' to do his part in convertin' the Russian haithen'—but he didn't say it to her!

"Phil Beffel claims he has invented a chemical which will convert gunpowder into turnip seed!

"Our orchestra gave a benefit concert for the European Red Cross. Cleared a hundred dollars. There was a fancy ball given by high society for the same purpose. There was much flashing of diamonds, and the proceeds were a thousand. I have heard that several of

the participants were interested in the manufacture of explosives and armor plate! They are as fit for philanthropy as a chicken is for the artillery. As long as we have this kind of charity and a public that lauds it, we'll have wars. Arsenals are built of many pet follies and indulgences.

"Probably my friend and deputy has already reached you, and I hope to see you in three or four weeks at the longest. This friend will bring you a very important letter from me. It will clear up whatever mysteries of my life I have hinted at of late. Be a brave girl when you read it. Meanwhile, God keep you!"

Vera reflected for a moment. What was the peculiar circumstance that prevented her father from coming in person? Who was th edeputy he was sending? Why did he avoid even the use of a personal pronoun, so that she might not know whether it was man or woman? She might be very particular when the representative arrived! Above all, what were those "mysteries"?

She was in outing dress when she read the letter, and a knock at her door reminded her of her engagement for this afternoon off duty. It was the affectionate smile of Sister Gerda that greeted her as she opened, and the two entered the waiting automobile. In it was seated Mrs. Stauffer, the mother of the nurse and of the young engineer. From the hearty greeting, it was evident they had become good friends.

And the driver sped them out over the wide chausees to where fortifications were being built. They were not permitted to approach closely, but Herbert Stauffer came riding out to greet and chat with them.

"I have leave of absence this evening. Don't run away!" he said, as he wheeled his horse and rode back to the works.

At the country house they were greeted by a genial sister-in-law of Mrs. Stauffer, a Frau Werder, who was keeping her company. Mrs. Stauffer had rented this spacious dwelling, surrounded by shade trees and orchards, in order to be near her son and daughter, who, by a fortunate coincidence, happened both to be stationed in that vicinity.

Her husband, though a member of the Bavarian Diet, had, at the outbreak of the war, carried away by enthusiasm, enlisted in the army and had fallen in one of the very first engagements.

Though an Englishwoman by birth, Mrs. Stauffer had become attached to the country of her adoption, the country that would be the home of her children and children's children, and in which lay their considerable estate. The loss of her devoted husband had left her all the more ardent a devotee to her offspring and to the great relief work th ewar demanded. Her house contained drafting rooms for her son, the engineer, as well as supply rooms for the relief service. In fact, nearly all the activities of the good women of the place were directed toward the relief of soldiers. Even as the company rested in the garden that autumn afternoon, they busied themselves with the making of garments. Mrs. Stauffer was crocheting a sweater.

"This one, Gerda," she said," I want you to give to some English lad—some especially deserving one—for old memories' sake!"

Vera noticed a particularly sad note in the matron's voice. "You being from England and now a German wife and mother, must find these war conditions especially deplorable," she ventured.

"Yes," said Mrs. Stauffer, gravely, "Germany my home, but England my cradle! I love my home but cannot forget my cradle. The two nations are cousins, and now of all the opponents the bitterest—all through commercial greed—Hugo's 'J'ai faim'!—And Gerda's lover an officer in the British navy!— It's tragic!"

Vera knew of Gerda's love affair. Her sympathy over it had drawn her nearer to the good nurse.

"You are the broader minded for belonging to the two nations," she said to the mother, to divert her thoughts.

"An American thought, my dear girl. Yes, I can the better comprehend that no single nation is the paragon of virtue,—but it's harder in these times to be a cosmopolite than to be a patriot."

In the evening, Herbert Stauffer returned. He was a most intelligent and interesting conversationalist and, withal, an accomplished pianist.

"What will be the result of this great war?" Vera asked him in the course of a discussion of the all-absorbing subject.

"I answer that as the son of a Bavarian father and an English mother," he said, promptly. "It is patent to all the world by this time, that this is a commercial war. At present England and France, with their colonies, have a vast commercial advantage over the rest of us. It is but natural for them to fight to maintain that advantage and put us out of the race, as it is natural for us to fight for

our existence as a great commercial nation. If we should win, it is my hope—though it may be a vain hope—that we will not seek to dominate the commercial world, but that we will be satisfied with what you Americans call a 'square deal' for us all; that the nations of Europe will gather about us in a great customs union, all commercial routes by land and sea to be free and open, international toll gates and tariff walls to come down, and, the chief incentives for further wars being removed, that it become possible, at last, for nations to disarm. Your forty-eight United States have no inter-state wars chiefly because you have no tariff dead-lines between them. The reason why our own kingdoms and dukedoms have ceased fighting each other is that they are united in a *Zollverein:* a customs union. A customs union in Europe would mean European peace; free commerce between antipodes and antipodes might mean universal peace. But my government, if victorious, may become despotic, as conquerors have generally been. I am no oracle: a Frenchman or Englishman would tell you *they* are the liberators. Each nation has its own approved version. All may be deceiving the world."

"Do you think you will win?"

"I'm sure!" he said, very positively; and then, with a smile: "The trouble is, every one of our enemies is just as confident of winning as we. If they win, may they *be* the liberators!"

"But even with all the toll gates down, there is the difference of language, religion, temperament!"

"What you told us of your father's ideas and experi-

ments in Detroit will apply here. Europe is becoming, though more gradually, a 'melting pot' as is America. Rapid intercommunication is doing it, and what he has aptly called the 'universal tongue', music, and the other arts, will, undoubtedly, help some to fuse the elements."

The conversation changed to the topic of national anthems.

"If music may be called a 'universal tongue', national anthems must be considered undesirable, out of date, ungrammatical provincialisms! They are but aids to the cannons. England, Austria, Russia and the rest have good anthems. Your United States is happily without one entirely its own, simply because she has not yet been in need of one. Germany has the most powerful of them, but France has the anthem of anthems! The 'Marseillaise' is the great cry of the people against the Bourbons, not of France alone but of all nations. It is the anthem fit to be the *International Anthem,* until some immortal composer in the better future composes the *International Peace Anthem, the Grand Concordia!*"

"Captain Stauffer, you are quite a seer for a practical engineer," declared Vera.

The young officer laughed: "Without visions, true or false, we'd soon all become mollusks!"

Here Gerda entered with her cello and a violin for Vera, and, as they had done on several evenings before, they spent an hour playing favorite compositions of the masters from among friends and foes in the great world conflict, and the rumbling of distant artillery receded farther and farther into the realm of the unreal, and for the mo-

ment there was no war.

Mrs. Stauffer and her sister-in-law sat listening, and only the garments they were crocheting for the wounded reminded them of the gruesome reality. The trio were inspired and played as though they had ever played together.

At the end Vera sang Lassen's "Ah, once I had a happy fatherland," by request of Frau Werder. When she came to the passage:

> "Then, straying in a distant foreign land,
> I met a maid so wondrous fair—
> And blond her tresses were——"

the eyes of the elder women grew moist, and the young engineer seemed to touch the keys with a tender, holy reverence; but when the last refrain came: "It was a dream!" he turned away his head as though listening for the inexorable command of his general amid that distant booming of the cannon.

Both mother and sister knew that the captain had, in the short period, learned to love this beautiful, talented American girl, and as the three left in the family car, the girls for the hospital and the engineer to accompany them there and return to the barracks, a new and glad hope filled the heart of the good matron, made desolate by the loss of her husband; and as she ceased to hear the thunder of the distant guns, she ceased, also, to hear the ominous refrain: "It was a dream!"

Chapter XVIII.

A WAR PANORAMA.

After a day's rest, following his adventure with the ambulance corps, Dr. Terry again took up his Red Cross work, now with the German army, though his intention was to return to French territory by first opportunity, for he had never entertained the thought that Vera might be with the Germans.

As far as his work was concerned, the transfer from one belligerent to another mattered little. He could get along in the two languages about equally well.

Ere long, he and several other surgeons were transferred to a hospital about fifty kilometers farther east. The lazaret was situated on a considerable eminence, which commanded a view of many miles to the south, east and west, where lay the trenches, batteries and camps of many thousands of German and Allied troops arrayed against each other.

They arrived at the place after nightfall. The sleeping apartments assigned to him were in a cupola, from which a door led out upon a wide flat roof. Before retiring, he stepped out upon this roof to get a view of the new surroundings.

He noticed, by his room light, a great red cross painted on this roof, as he had seen it on the roofs of ambulance trains, to protect them against attacks of aeroplanes. Was it not also a protest to heaven against the violation of the religion of the cross by the raging passions of de-

christianized Europe, the Europe that had refused to apply Christianity to its economics and politics?

He looked beyond, and there, in the clear autumn night, a wonderful panorama presented itself to him.

At a distance of about five miles to the south and for many miles from the eastern to the western horizon, the country was dotted with irregular, many-colored lights, and among these, from the hilltops, at intervals, the bright rays of the searchlights swept the sky and earth, like the glow from opened furnace doors. A night attack on a large scale was being executed before his eyes.

Here and there he could see rows of tiny tongues of flames dart up, and then hear the faint rattle of rifle-fire from the nearest trenches. This side of the trenches and far beyond, leaped up the greenish flames of rockets and shrapnel.

Now from commanding positions rose great, almost perpendicular columns of fire. Some moments after, came heavy detonations and the weird moan of monstrous missiles speeding away on their deadly missions. It was the big howitzer batteries at work.

During a lull in the gunfire, he heard a faint buzzing in the distant sky. The bird-men, the night hawks of this battlefield, were at work, spying out the enemy's positions from the flashes of his guns.

While with the French, the doctor had experienced all the national feelings of the Frenchmen, after a few days' work with the German surgeons, seeing the same devotion and self-sacrifice on that side, he had allowed himself to fall as completely under the German spell, the only thing that drew him to the other side being the thought that

Vera was with the French. Now, in the presence of this grand spectacle, he became a cosmopolitan again.

Here was the monstrous War Moloch, in the greatest ethnical struggle of the ages, by the ingenuity of man turning night into day, in order to accomplish his destruction the more speedily. And, above all, the stars in the great deep as serene as in the Golden Age.

The effect of this scene of the great world tragedy on Dr. Terry's mind was astounding. He was conscious that the thousands struggling in this arena were but a corporal's guard in the grand total: that millions, along a line of over a thousand miles, were engaged in the same grim work: that out among the antipodes, at the farthest borders of Africa and Asia, the partisans of these belligerents were also spilling each other's blood. Where and when would it all end? Would it end only with the destruction of present civilization? Would the fury never abate until Europe had committed suicide and, perhaps, the legions of the prodded and awakened yellow men would sweep over it and take possession?

Was it ever to be so on earth? Was life ever to be so prodigal with life? Was it ever to be the nature of the young males of the races to rush willingly upon each other in mortal combat, with the cry of the Roman gladiator on their lips: "Ave Caesar, morituri te salutant!"—

Was this not all unspeakable folly or was there, possibly, some grand, inscrutable purpose in this vast raging of the nations?

Surely, a present day Shakespeare would write: "All the world's a slaughter-house!"

"Hail, Caesar! We, about to die, salute thee!"

What does it all mean?

Does it not mean that the individual is to the state as the cell to the tissue; that men, in a crisis, are but units of groups,—these groups ever increasing in size and diminishing in number; and that, until the great "melting pot" has completed its work, men will continue to rally about their leaders and contend as groups?

"Hail, Caesar! We, as we go out to die, salute thee!"

But there was, once, yet another voice, a voice gentle and divine, raised amid the bloody days of the Roman empire, a voice that is yet to be understood in the marts of the world, and to be translated into the very hum of the wheels of the world's industries, which said:

"PEACE BE WITH YOU!"

Chapter XIX.

A SHOT FROM A NONCOMBATANT.

Dr. Terry arose early next morning and walked briskly over the country road that wound its way from the hospital along the crest of a ridge toward the wooded hills to the north. His duties in the operating room would begin at noon and he needed this "constitutional" to strengthen his nerves for the task.

During the night the air had grown damp, and a

heavy fog now covered hill and dale and entirely shut off the view of the vast battlefields to the south. Evidently it had also interfered with operations there, for nothing was heard now but the occasional boom of a cannon. King Moloch was marking time at this place and moment, though he was wont to order a charge under cover of a fog.

The young man's thoughts were those of self-reproach. He had not yet redeemed his promise to Mr. Garrett and himself. His request to the German authorities, to be returned to the French, had met with no immediate result. He must make another strong effort. He had seen the Turcos and other half-savage mercenaries over there. Perhaps Vera had indeed, in spite of all protection by the French, fallen "among wolves," and he should be there with the "art" that Mr. Pickett had recommended.

He had walked about a mile, when he heard the rumbling of carts, the rattling of heavy harnesses and sharp words of command. As he approached, he saw emerging from the mist, a company of soldiers, breaking camp, and beyond, an ammunition train, preparing to start.

A sentry challenged him, and he showed his papers and made explanations. While he did so, a group of people near some of the ammunition wagons attracted his attention. There were several officers talking familiarly with some nurses in Red Cross uniform, who had evidently also taken a morning stroll from the hospital.

As one of the young ladies turned, he felt his heart cease to beat. He strained his eyes to make sure this was not an illusion. It was the classical profile of Vera—

Garrett (how both strange and familiar the new name sounded to him!) that he beheld, as she conversed with the tall officer before her, who appeared very attentive and devoted, while Vera's face beamed with animation and interest.

Was it possible! How did she come here from the French? Now he blessed the fortunes of war that had made him captive of the Germans.

His first impulse was to call her by name and say: "I bring greetings from your father. I have come to explain away an error and take you home!" but the situation did not permit.

He scarcely had time for a second thought, when he heard a familiar whirring sound above him. He glanced up quickly and his blood ran cold. An aeroplane with the French flag was swooping very low, directly toward the ammunition wagons, near which Vera and her companions were standing. He could plainly see the aviator with lowered bomb, ready to launch it at the valuable prize. The horror of the thought: to have found the girl he loved, after the long perilous search, and in the same moment to see her perish before his eyes! If the bomb did not kill, the explosion of the ammunition wagons would certainly mean death to the entire group.

The noise of breaking camp, and the fog had favored the bird-man, who must have had other information as to the position of the convoy. Not even the sentries had heard him, or they had confused the noise of his machine with that of one of their own *taubes*.

Rifles were stacked within arm's reach of where Dr. Terry stood. In a second, while the sentry was turning

away, one was at his shoulder. He prayed that it might not be empty. Then a report, and the flyer turned, dived, and seemed to flounder like a wounded bird. The steering gear had been struck. Thank God! Now he could see the desperate glare of the aviator's eyes almost directly above him. He saw the bomb drop and strike not many yards away. Then a dull thud in his head—darkness and oblivion.

When he awoke, he found himself in a small hospital ward. His head and left shoulder were heavily bandaged, and all his bones seemed to ache. It was evening and the lights were burning dimly in the room. It took him some time to realize what had happened. Then he turned toward the man in the one other bed in the room. He was sitting up, with his arm in a sling.

"Bon soir!" the man said.

Glenn Terry returned the greeting in French. Then he thought he remembered the features. "Who are you?" he asked in the same language.

"If your eye is as good at faces as it is at rifle-sights, you ought to know!" said the Frenchman with an appreciative smile. "I suppose they put you in here with me that we might exchange more pleasant compliments than we did this morning!"

"So it's you!—Probably I owe you and your government an apology," said the doctor.

The Frenchman was surprised and began to laugh. "For what?—For not sending up a parachute to save the bones of this arm?" he said.

"I am an American Red Cross surgeon and have no quarrel with France."

The manner of the aviator changed in a moment. "The devil!—Then what business had you to interfere with me?" he asked, indignantly.

"Did you notice the women beside those ammunition wagons?" returned Dr. Terry.

"At the last moment, yes."

"And you would have dropped the bomb there?"

"I was under military orders to destroy that ammunition."

"And would have killed noncombatant women in doing so?"

"Never, had I been left a choice; under military orders, which are final as fate the world over, yes! Disobedience deserves disgrace and death, under Mars. Complain to him!—On the other side of the line you might have brought down a German at the same disagreeable task. I hope you're not prating of 'civilized warfare.' —Whatever your own General Sherman may have been, he was no hypocrite. That ammunition may kill many a Frenchman!"

"I should honestly regret that; but I also acted under absolute orders. Those women, as neutrals, had a right to my protection as a neutral, and I was under orders—absolute orders, final as fate, from the dictator of my life: my conscience. A little private war of my own, you see! Was I justified?"

The expression of the Frenchman's face softened. "As a man, not as a soldier, I may say, you were," he admitted.

Then a surgeon and a nurse entered, dressed their wounds and expressed satisfaction at their condition.

Glenn Terry had been struck in head and shoulder by particles of the shell, but neither wound was necessarily dangerous. The surgeon congratulated the American on his marksmanship and suggested, humorously, for the benefit of his roommate, that he be recommended for the Iron Cross!"

"Carnegie Medal would do!" fired back the Frenchman, blithely.

As the surgeon and the nurses left, Dr. Terry noticed that the small ward was adjacent to a very large one, in which were many patients. They seemed to be the more lightly wounded, for many were sitting up in bed, others reclining in chairs. The door was left open a few moments and he noticed that the occupants were brushing up for some event. Then the door was closed. Soon after, he and his companion heard a commotion and applause, then the chords of a piano and the strains of a violin. Both listened intently, and the doctor was strangely affected: it was the love melody the young chemist at the "little Hague" had written to his French sweetheart, because, in his opinion, the words of three languages would not suffice to express his passion; and the doctor knew that only Vera could play it as it was being played there. There seemed to be no other sound in the entire building, and, looking over at his companion, he noticed that he was oblivious to everything but the music. Then loud applause and cries of "Encore!" and part of the melody was repeated.

When it was finished, the silent Frenchman reached over with his uninjured hand, and grasping the right of the doctor said warmly: "Sublime, mon ami! It is

French."

The doctor knew this was true, as to its inspiration.

To the nurse who re-entered, the doctor said: "May we have the door open?" and, the Frenchman adding his appeal, she left it wide as she stepped out.

At the other end of the long ward ,in plain view from Dr. Terry's cot sat a German officer at the piano. Beside him, in neat nurse's dress and cap, stood Vera. She had laid down her violin. The light about the little improvised musicians' platform brightly illumined her beautiful features. She was somewhat pale from the arduous work of the past weeks, but as she looked down into the wistful faces of her bandaged audience, the generous zeal to alleviate mental and physical suffering by the art at her command, enhanced the charm of her personality beyond description.

The officer at the piano started the accompaniment and Vera sang to the soldiers the simple folk songs that have been written in the past generations "of the people, by the people, and for the people," such as Die Lorelei, the Chanson Florian, Annie Laurie, Caro Mio Ben, Hans und Liesel, Where the River Shannon Flows, Robin Adair, Home, Sweet Home. And the wounded Frenchmen, Englishmen, Germans, Turcos, Hindoos and the rest sat as in a reverie, the tears streaming down the cheeks of many of the stricken warriors as the sweet renditon of these popular classics carried them back to the peaceful scenes of their homes, and as they perceived the same emotions in their fellow sufferers from opposing armies, they became conscious of th close affinity of all human beings, an affinity which is obscured only by the barriers of language,

customs—and custom-houses—and destroyed by the passions of national hatred only then, when the war furies are harnessed and lashed by powers taking advantage of the tribal limitations of mankind.

Orpheus was again playing his lyre among the wild beasts, the savage passions of man. The muse was pouring oil on the troubled waters that were threatening destruction to every ship of state. The faint promise of the coming day of peace was in that hospital ward, and the hope and desire of it in every soldier's heart there, and the girl who inspired the hope was the daughter of "Armin Pickett," the man with a "hobby" with which he had been combating a "bogy."

And Glenn Terry lay there in his bandages, all his physical pains forgotten, in silent worship, so near the girl he loved and had crossed ocean and battlefield to protect and to win, yet well knowing that she had not recognized him as her protector from the bomb of the aviator.

In the excitement of the bursting of that bomb and the fall of the aeroplane, she had probably been hurried back to the hospital in the automobile of one of the officers—most likely this officer at the piano, for he recognized him as the one who had conversed with her out there; and it was to this man that she was now turning with a smile for which he himself would have given his life.

The sight and thought of this roused him from his peaceful reveries. What right had this German officer here? Had he taken advantage of Vera as a stranger in a strange land and won her heart by his protection and his musical talents? And he, Glenn Terry, here in a helpless

condition in which he could not present himself as a suitor, even though his wounds had been incurred in defense of the girl!

But he would soon mend, and then there *should* be war!

He and the aviator joined in the loud demonstration that burst forth when the singing ended, and the young American felt the hand of the Frenchman on his unwounded shoulder.

"Do you know the young lady?" was the question.

"She was one of those who stood beside the ammunition wagons," said the doctor.

The Frenchman glanced toward the platform where Vera still stood and then back at the doctor. An abhorrent thought seemed to oppress his buoyant spirit.

"You owe no apology either to me or to my government!—Sacre bleu! why didn't you shoot me instead of the machinery?"

Vera, in leaving the large ward, passed the door of the small room within a few yards of where Dr. Terry lay. A thrill ran through his wounded frame as he noticed her stop, with a gesture toward the small apartment, and a remark in undertone to the officer. She passed on, but the officer approached the doctor's cot.

Peering down at him, in the dim light, he said very cordially in English: "I hear you are the sharpshooter who brought down our friend the daring aviator there and saved several of us from being blown to bits."

"He is zee bloody snipare!" put in the Frenchman, in English, with a laugh. He had learned the expression from some jolly Tommy Atkins.

Glenn Terry smiled as he took the proffered hand of the German officer. In spite of the growing feeling of jealousy, he otherwise approved of this man. He seemed like a square, refined fellow. That he knew nothing more about Terry was evident.

"Yes, I am the sniper!" said the doctor.

"I wish to thank you in the name of all of us. The rest will be in later. We did not know you were hurt till this evening. How badly, may I ask?"

"Oh, just a few bruises and scratches from the bomb," replied the doctor.

"Scratches a la guerre!'" laughed the Frenchman again.

"Is there anything I can do for you?" asked the officer.

"Nothing, thank you."

"Should there be, call up Captain Stauffer of the Eleventh Engineers."

"I will, Captain."

"Speedy recovery! Auf Wiedersehn!"

The officer saluted him and the aviator and left the room.

"Very fine fellow. Just as well satisfied I didn't kill him, though he might have kept the ladies away from that powder," concluded the aviator in French, then turned over and went to sleep.

As Dr. Terry lay thinking over events, he happened to glance down at the floor beside the cot. There he espied a white envelope, unsealed. Quickly his hand went to his breast as though searching for something. Then he noticed that his clothes were hanging back of him, on the

wall. Yes, the letter must have dropped out of them, the long letter that Mr. Garret had written and given him to deliver to Vera. Mr. Garrett had purposely left it unsealed, but the doctor had also purposely never permitted himself to read it. With great difficulty and pain he reached down and picked it up. Mr. Garrett had not even addressed the envelope. How careless of him to carry it about him without an address. How easily it might be lost. A pencil lay on the table before him. He wrote Vera's name on the envelope, but he wrote it "Pickett," not "Garrett"; then, again with great difficulty, he raised himself up and dropped the letter into the pocket of his coat.

Chapter XX.

COURT MARTIAL.

In the envelope that Captain Stauffer dropped beside Glenn Terry's cot while bending over him in conversation were two important documents: one was a draft and specifications of a fortification to be constructed, the other the formula for the manufacture of a new and very powerful explosive. Captain Stauffer was one of a committee of experts who had consulted over these documents at the house of his mother, and as details were left to him, he had carried the papers about on his person.

When, on the following evening, the committee met again and it was found that the valuable papers were missing, there was consternation in the assembly. The Captain had been in many places since the former meeting, and members of the secret service were at once set to work. Special suspicion was attached to all foreigners, and a woman of the secret service, disguised as a nurse, examining the clothes of Dr. Terry while the two patients were asleep, found there the documents enclosed in the unsealed envelope addressed to Vera Pickett.

Dr. Terry, during the night, had been dreaming of the message of Mr. Garrett to Vera. He knew that it was of great importance, and, as he woke up, he reached over to his coat to make sure it was still there. To his dismay, it was not where he had put it. But on further examination, he found it in a secret inside pocket of his vest, where he had carried it before. How had it come back there?—Had his hurts made him a somnambulist? But there was no address on this envelope! Would a somnambulist also erase a leadpencil address? He looked over toward his companion, who was sound asleep. No, there would have been no object in his performing this legerdemain trick. There was puzzle enough for the doctor to ponder over for the rest of the day. He wondered why the new nurse who attended him came in so often and kept such close watch over him.

"What have you been drinking?" asked the Frenchman, struck by the absentmindedness of his neighbor.

"Beef broth."

"Then the ox that furnished it was drugged. You're only half awake."

After breakfast an attendant entered the room under orders to dress the two patients. This performed, to their surprise, two officers appeared and led them out to an elevator in which they were taken to the second floor above. The strain from walking caused Glenn Terry severe pain in the shoulder. To his question as to the meaning of this procedure, the reply was a very coldly polite "Just a minute, please."

They entered a large room, judging from the well-filled book shelves evidently the study of the former occupant of the chateau. A group of officers were seated in a semi-circle at the further end, the presiding officer and a stenographer at a table in the center. On either side of the room were two chairs, placed diagonally, so that the occupants would be facing both each other and the officers. In the two chairs at the left, the wounded men were seated.

This was getting interesting, indeed! What was it all about? For whom were the two vacant seats? The assembly was waiting in silence. Glenn Terry heard footsteps at the door. And now the climax of the puzzle: there entered, accompanied by Captain Stauffer—Vera Garrett! What was her mission here? She was in her plain nurse's garb, and it dressed her as becomingly as ever. She entered with her wonted light, graceful step, though she seemed as much perplexed as were the two patients, and was evidently questioning her escort, who, in his conversation, was doing bravely to prevent her embarrassment.

Dr. Terry's ire arose. Had this rival of his learned his identity, and was he now concocting something

against him?

At first Vera took note of only the officers in front, then, as she and the Captain were seated in the chairs opposite the wounded men, she glanced across and recognized, in the young man with head and shoulders heavily bandaged, Dr. Terry of Detroit!

Vera gave a start. Dr. Terry was trying hard to look at her calmly, but the cry of his heart was written too plainly in his eyes, the cry that had been repressed only through an incident of a private feud and the obstacles of open war, for all these weeks.

Vera could not have been taken more by surprise. A storm of thoughts and emotions passed through her mind in a moment. What had brought the young physician here from Detroit? Was the fortune hunter in him strong enough to brave the hardships and dangers—or was it possible, after all, that he was sincere? He had never looked the part of a deceiver. How had he been wounded, severely as it seemed, and why were they all summoned here before what was unmistakably a court martial? Captain Stauffer had evidently been forbidden to prepare her for this ordeal.

Not a person in that room but noticed the extreme agitation in these two young people, as they faced each other. The Frenchman was curious, Captain Stauffer appeared worried, and the members of the court eyed each other as if to say: "There is a secret understanding between them. They are guilty."

The presiding officer opened the session in English:

"Dr. Glenn Terry and Nurse Vera Pickett, you are summoned before this court on the charge of espionage.

Are you guilty or not guilty?"

The two thus accused, again looked at each other, now in consternation, while the Captain beside Vera bowed his head.

"Not guilty!" said the doctor, in a loud tone that rang with defiant indignation. "Not guilty," echoed Vera, as emphatically.

Captain Stauffer drew a breath of relief.

"Dr. Terry, you are an American?" continued the presiding officer.

"I am."

"You were with the French army recently?"

"I was."

"Were you wounded, while with the French?"

"Once, slightly."

"While fighting for France?"

"No, while rescuing wounded Frenchmen as Red Cross surgeon.

"Was it you who, with a rifle shot brought down the machine of the French aviator who sits beside you?"

"Yes."

At this Vera started visibly, and Dr. Terry, though he was facing his questioner, could feel her eyes fastened on him.

"Your purpose in firing that fortunate shot was to prevent the destruction of our ammunition wagons, was it not?"

"Decidedly not! I am a neutral."

"Then what was your purpose?"

"To save the life of Miss Pickett and other ladies standing beside the ammunition."

Glenn Terry could not refrain from looking toward Vera. She had suddenly grown pale, her eyes were still on him, and her bosom was heaving heavily. Captain Stauffer cast a swift glance from one to the other and then fastened his gaze on the doctor.

"You were acquainted with Miss Pickett in America?"

"I have the honor."

"And you have met her often in Europe?"

"I saw her a moment before I fired the shot, afterwards in the hospital ward next to ours,—never to speak to."

"You received your present wounds from the bomb of the Frenchman beside you?"

"I did."

"What conversation have you had with him about the incident?"

"I have apologized to him."

"Not accepted!" spoke up the Gallic aviator, suddenly in latinized English. "I owe zee grand lady over zere zee profound apologee!" and he rose and made Vera a deep bow. She smiled and nodded.

"Silence!" commanded the officer sharply, but unable to suppress the smile that made the rounds of the assembly.

"Did you every try your skill on any of *our* flyers when within the French lines?"

"There was never any provocation, or I might have done so. I hear many women have been killed by both German and French aviators."

The remark made no impression on the court. These men had accepted war, as it was, is, and ever will be.

Vera's eyes were again on the doctor. She liked his frankness.

"But zee young people do not hold zee tete-a-tetes near powdare magazines in zee French army!" blurted out the aviator with a squint at Captain Stauffer.

Even Vera, Dr. Terry and the Captain were tittering now. The solemnity of the court was greatly disturbed. The aviator was dismissed forthwith, making his exit with a profound farewell bow to Vera, while his genial face beamed humor and admiration.

The officer then approached Dr. Terry and held before him for one moment the plans of a fortification and the formula for the explosive.

"Have you ever seen these before?"

"I have not."

The officer held up the envelope. Dr. Terry was surprised and alarmed to see that it was the one on which he had written Vera's name. The dangerous situation was apparent to him in a flash. At once his hand went to the secret pocket of his vest. He smiled triumphantly.

"Have you seen this?" said the officer.

"I have."

"These documents, enclosed in this envelope, were found in your clothes by one of our secret agents. Do you mean to say you never examined them?"

"I never saw them."

"How about block house No. 3?" came the sudden question accompanied by a fierce stare.

"What do you mean, sir?"

The officer was visibly disappointed by the quiet tone and mien.

"Then why did you obtain possession of these and address them to Miss Pickett? Were you not conniving with the lady to turn them over to the enemy?"

Then Dr. Terry explained how he had found the envelope after the departure of Captain Stauffer, how he had taken it for the letter from Vera's father to her, and had written her name on the cover to prevent its being lost, and how he had been puzzled later to find the addressed envelope gone and to find the plain one in its original place.

"The court demands that letter as evidence."

Dr. Terry hesitated. "I have not read the letter myself. It is a private letter from a father to his daughter. May the lady read the letter first? She can then turn it over to you, if you demand it."

Here Captain Stauffer arose and seconded the request. It was granted. A recess was called, and while the Captain mingled with the other officers in conversation, the letter, which Dr. Terry drew forth from his bosom, was handed to Vera, and she read.

During the hearing, Glenn Terry had felt that Vera was following him with increasing interest, even fascination. Now he watched her intently, while she hastily read through the letter. He had an idea of the revelations the message was effecting in her mind and how hard it was for her, for the moment, to get her bearings in the new situation. At first, she had grown very pale, then, gradually, the color returned; she seemed to be reading faster and faster, devouring the contents eagerly, and finally she burst into tears. Then she arose and handed the letter to Captain Stauffer.

"You may read this, if you care to," she said.

"Read it by yourself," said the presiding officer, who was visibly impressed by the beauty and manner, and now by the evident distress of the girl, and the young engineer sat down at the table and scanned the lines in intense agitation, at times skipping a page, while Vera sat with her face buried in her handkerchief.

When the Captain had finished, he arose, and said with deep feeling: "Your Honor, this is not a matter of war, or of our concern. In simple civic courtesy, we have no right to molest these people another moment. We have been entirely deceivd by circumstances. I vouch for that and propose that all further proceedings be dismissed. I shall give you the contents of this letter later. It is from a worthy American father to his daughter. Meanwhile, I stake my life and my honor as a man and a soldier on the absolute innocence of the defendants and the positive fact that neither of them has read these documents, nor violated in any way the sacred institution of the Red Cross. I furthermore recommend that these young Americans be released from the hospital service at once and be given passports for America."

"Upon your word of honor, we adjourn!" said the presiding officer, to the surprise of all, and then he added: "Our apologies to the young lady, and thanks again, Mr. Sharpshooter!" Then, without more ado, the entire court martial left the room.

Captain Stauffer stepped up to Dr. Terry, who rose from his chair on his approach.

"Dr. Terry, (the letter has taught me your name), I'm glad this is over. If I could have done so, I should have

prevented the trial. I've suffered every torture during it. But now I want to congratulate you, sir, for I know that you have today won the heart of this most—precious —young woman! It has been our rare good fortune to enjoy her presence at our home of late."

The doctor pressed the engineer's hand heartily. By every indication, he knew that it was costing the young man dearly to utter these words.

"I thank you, Captain!" he said.

The engineer turned to Vera. "Miss—Pickett, as long as the war permits me to live, those moments spent in your company will remain my brightest memories. It is for you over in America, in this day, to be happy; for us over here—to die. God bless you!"

Vera could only press his hand and answer with a tearful smile.

An orderly entered and handed the Captain a note.

"Hurrah!—How timely!" cried the engineer. "Our regiment ordered to the front to construct field works—under fire. There will be excitement enough, don't you think?—Thank God for that!" He saluted, and was gone.

Chapter XXI.

THE LETTER.

For a moment there was silence in that improvised court room. Then light footsteps in the corridor ap-

proached, paused, and grew fainter again. Evidently there was still a guard.

Vera, red eyed and flushed, and the doctor, still pale from the effects of his hurts, now stood alone, facing each other. The young man was about to break the silence with impassioned words, but the girl anticipated him.

"Doctor Terry," she said, in a voice soft and trembling with emotion, "why have you not read this letter?"

"I saved it as a child does a morsel. I wanted you to read it and reveal the *entire* mystery to me!" he said.

"I cannot, and in all this commotion I've not yet comprehended it. But I want to hear it all—from you. Do you feel strong enough——"

She held out the letter to him. He made no answer but led her to the armchair just vacated by the presiding officer and, seating himself at the opposite side of the table, began to read, while she sat with folded hands, her bewildered eyes now wandering far away, now searching the features of the reader.

The letter read as follows:

"My dear daughter Vera:—

"Perhaps you will smile when I say I am writing you, for your own convenience, a letter of *self identification!* The fact is, your passports are all right for practical purposes, but they are not correct.

"I can now answer the question you put to me when I abandoned the man in that auto accident: 'Why have we done this?' Since then you have, perhaps, mistrusted me, and that shock to your faith may have induced you so easily to lose faith in—Glenn Terry, who will deliver

this letter to you. May it restore your trust in both him and me.

"I, your father, am not Armin Pickett, but *Horace Garrett,* of Lexington, Kentucky.

"When a youth, I studied architecture and later opened an office in Denver, Colorado. In a musical club of which I was a member, I met a young lawyer, Gilbert Terry, an excellent young man, and we became close friends.

"Both of us enjoyed the acquaintance of a beautiful and accomplished young lady of that city, a certain Eloise Gilpin. In my case it was 'love at first sight', but I never had the opportunity to declare it to her, for shortly after the acquaintance, I was called to Lexington by the death of both of my parents, which occurred within the same week, and during my detention there, while settling matters of the estate, Gilbert Terry took the girl by storm and married her.

"Neither of them shall ever hear of my infatuation and bitter disappointment. (I ask secrecy from you—and Glenn Terry—on that point.) I remained a friend of the household and became much attached to their children, the boy Glenn and a girl, Ione, to whom, by the kindergarten method, I gave their first lessons in music and the other arts of which I had a smattering. The boy, as you have learned, still has a faint recollection of this.

"When Glenn, the younger, was barely five and a half years old, his father entered the campaign for city attorney. It was a three-cornered fight. The contestants were Gilbert Terry, Wendell Grubaker, and—Samuel Blake.

"The fight was a very bitter one. While Sam Blake was a creature with a mean temper, my friend Terry was never a vindictive man; but in the heat of an argument with Grubaker he made a very foolish threat to do the latter bodily harm, and I, just as foolishly, seconded him.

"A few days later, Grubaker was found dead in his office. The report of a revolver had been heard, and the weapon beside the corpse was one that belonged to Gilbert Terry. Terry was found in his office in the same building, was imprisoned, and indicted for murder. Samuel Blake had managed to 'prove' an alibi.

"I never for a moment believed in Terry's guilt, but the evidence was very strong against him. The thought of the terrible misfortune that would wreck the home of my friends was more than I could bear. Both Gilbert Terry and myself were known as crack shots with any kind of gun. It was one point against Gilbert. My office happened to be across the street from that of Grubaker. The noise of the traffic and steel construction work going on in the block had almost drowned the report of the gun. No one seemed to have located it at the time. The body had later been found before a window facing my office.

"My mind was made up quickly. I wrote a letter to the authorities, confessing to have fired the shot from my window, and I fled to the far Northwest. My personal appeal to Terry in the name of his wife and children, had won his reluctant consent to the plan.

"The letter was produced in evidence at the trial, and turned the scale in favor of Terry, who was acquitted.

"The election took place before the trial. Samuel

Blake had easy sailing. The substitute candidates stood no chance. Blake was elected. Terry continued his practice and has lately been elected judge.

"I managed to escape the detectives and, under the assumd name, Armin Pickett, soon prospered in the mining districts of Montana. It was the shot of the unknown assassin that had driven me to the wilds, it was the lucky shot from my own weapon that introduced me to your mother, as you know from the painting in the library. I confided my secret to her. She was the only one in Montana that ever knew it, and she married me in the face of it. We were very happy until her death.

"Yet, you may imagine, my child, that all these years a great burden has been upon me, and when mother left us, the fierce desire to avenge myself upon the unknown miscreant, whose crime had caused my being a fugitive from the law and bringing up my child under an assumed name—this fury which had already induced me to make a secret but fruitless search for the assassin and might at any time have provoked me to throw caution aside and expose myself to the police, made it necessary for me to occupy my mind in an entirely different direction from that of feud. And so, for caution and relief, I began to read the books of the pacifists, and when we came to Detroit, I set up that experiment station, the little Hague' as my pet hobby. It has been a wholesome diversion to my mind. May it have some other good results!

"I was awakened from my pacifist dreams by the unexpected collision with Sam Blake on that stormy night. He had made himself unpopular in office at Denver and had gone into the real estate business, but I knew nothing of

his presence in Detroit till the accident. You know now, why I could not take him to the hospital.

"I made secret inquiries at Harper and there fortunately obtained the solution of the mystery. The man had recognized me after all, and in his sleep, when the fever was on him, he cried out repeatedly: "I shot Grubaker, but Garrett will hang for it!"

"There are several witnesses to that. I've been working on the clue since.

"Blake has been prowling about our premises. It was he who ran into Phil Beffel that night, it was he, I'm sure, who wrote that infamous note, and signed it "Tim." He knew it was necessary to estrange you and Dr. Terry.—You will forgive Betsy for digging up the note and enlightening Glenn Terry and me.

"And now Blake has made a desperate attempt to do away with me; but his bullet has only lamed me for the present, so that I cannot come to you. He is in prison, with the mark of my bullet in his hand. Dr. Terry has brought me out of danger and I am sending him to you in my stead, at his own request, to bring you home. He knows my story and has made a little confession of his own to me and, incidentally, berated me for taking a country ride on a black pony!—He is Gilbert Terry over again, even to his marksmanship, and has all the splendid qualities of his mother. There is only one person on this earth to whom I a mbound closer than to him by all the bonds of affection from infancy, and that is you, my own dear child, Vera *Garrett!*

"O, the joy of it!—To be able to call my little girl by that name at last!

"I hope you are perfectly safe where you are, but if you should be in any danger, the man that will surely rescue you or die in the attempt is Glenn.

"Until the return of both of you to Detroit—and Denver!—God keep you!

"Your affectionate father—from now on before all the world: Horace Garrett."

Glenn Terry noticed, while reading, that Vera had again been moved to tears, and it took a strong effort on his part, especially during the last paragraphs, to remain calmly at the task. Now she looked up at him with that in her wonderful, still half-bewildered eyes which made his heart leap with joy, as he rose and stood regarding her with all the tenderness of a great, patient love written in his features. Then the eyes of both filled with laughter and joy.

"Vera *Garrett!*" he said, with a deep intonation of the name by which, he knew, she had never been addressed before, even by her own parents.

"Glenn Terry!" she simply said, as she came to him.

*** As they started to leave the room, Vera asked solicitously: "May I lead you, Glenn?" for she noticed how pale he was.

"Thank you, Vera," he said, "I'm perfectly well. Why, I could lead a howitzer battery over Pike's Peak and play the banjo doing it!"

"Would you play Turkey in the Straw?"

"Nothing else, Vera, for to me it's the prelude of 'The Hymn to Joy'!"

"And when they walked together down to the ward, past the mysterious nurse, who followed them and hover-

ed about, the doctor did not feel the pain of the wounds he had received in defense of the girl, even the distant thunder of the guns was music in his ears, and his step was as firm as that of an imperial guardsman on parade.

Chapter XXII.

SO ENDS THE FEUD.

For some days Dr. Terry and Vera were still conscious of being closely watched and guarded, but of a sudden the surveillance seemed to cease, and after Glenn's recovery, both he and Vera were released from the service and given passports to France.

When they took leave of the French aviator, the latter said to Vera in his choice English, with which he knew he could amuse his friends: "Mademoiselle, your lovare is zee grand snipare: you will have zee magnificent protector. If I am exchange and my military duty becomes again cruell, I hope wan like him will again take a snipe at my duty!"

"Can I do you a favor?" asked the doctor.

"Oui!—When you return home, isolate zee warbacillus and send us a remedy to Europe, to kill zee germ. Eet is more necessary, for zee welfare of zee world, to kill zis germ zan to kill even zee German!" Which for a French soldier, during the maddening holocaust of nine-

teen hundred and fourteen, was surely a very generous concession.

"We have a laboratory for that purpose in Detroit," replied the doctor; but the Frenchman smiled incredulously as he bid them "Au revoir!"

Mr. Garrett greeted Vera and Glenn at the Hoboken docks. He still walked with a cane but was otherwise hale and hearty. As he took the happy girl in his arms, he could only say: "Thank God!" but as they rode to their quarters in the city, his humor and talkativeness returned.

"Well, children," he remarked, "you look very well for having been through the war! Glenn, I hear you had to do some sharpshooting again, finally to get the girl."

"Glad my father taught me how!"

"And how do you like our new name, Vera?"

"So well, father, that I'm almost sorry Dr. Terry wants me to change it so soon!"

A week before the landing of the two lovers, the trial of Sam Blake for the murder of Grubaker had taken place at Denver. The man, entirely demoralized by the miscarriage of his attempts in Detroit, was easily convicted on the evidence of Mr. Pickett, his gardener, Blake's office boy, nurses and doctors of Harper Hospital, Phil Beffel with his offended solar plexus, and the old janitor at the office building in Denver, who confessed to having seen the assassin leave the room of the crime, and to having been bribed into silence. Blake was given a life sentence.

And up at Detroit, on the wall of the den of Mr. Garrett's bungalow, hung the clarinet, all its metal parts

glistening from recent burnishing; but beneath it the 38-caliber revolver had disappeared. It was now at the bottom of an old trunk among other relics. Yet it had had its turn, even at the hands of this pacifist.

It took some effort on the part of Horace Garrett to prevent his Denver friends from appointing a public fete in honor of the man who had gone into a long, voluntary exile to save his friend and family from disaster, and the feelings of Judge Gilbert Terry and his wife may be imagined. Terry had tried, these years, to bring the guilty man to light and justice, with the intention of then publishing in the press a call to his friend to return. His wife had never believed in Horace Garrett's guilt.

The Terrys were all present at the Bungalow, once known as the Pickett—now the Garrett residence, in Detroit—on that spring day of 1915, the day on which the old bonds of friendship and gratitude that bound the two families together were to be drawn still closer by the marriage of Vera and Glenn. It was May-time, and the wide lawns between the hedges that surrounded the bungalow were fringed and studded by many-shaped beds, all aglow with varicolored blossoms. "The spring, the spring has come again!" was the glad message of the minstrels of the air, and the two young lovers were filled with the ancient, happy conceit, as expressed in the verse:

> "And no two hearts in all the world
> Have ever loved the spring as you and I."

When Glenn's married sister arrived with her little daughter, threw her arms about Mr. Garret, the friend of her babyhood and kissed him, he could not help saying:

"Ione, what a handsome woman you have become! If your little girl grows up into your likeness, you'll all have but one rival on earth, and that's the future wife of Glenn!"

It was Mammy Betsy's privilege to dress her young mistress in her wedding finery. While doing so, she remarked: "Vera, honey, you knows I's no pertic'lar hand to prize inter yo' private affairs, but I suah is glad I done nosed out dat 'are note and slipped dat 'are rabbit's foot inter yo' trunk: fo' in all bof cases I suah done completely busted de hoodoo!"

With all of which Vera honey readily agreed.

When later on, Glenn Terry met his beautiful young mate for the bridal march, Miss Pomeroy in the music room was singing Lefevere's love song:

"O Mavis, Mavis, Mavis, the birds are calling you, sweet.
The children are roaming the meadows for flowers to
strew at your feet."

And when the unconventional wedding ceremony began, there was the unique and pretty array of white clad flower girls from among the multi-typical children of the "little Hague"; and the orchestra, with Berthold and Lisette Stark still there, and Mr. Calvert directing, played the wedding march.

After the wedding feast, there were games, many of them strange to Americans, on the wide lawn, and the cosmopolitan boy teams with the little Yankee as umpire, played a baseball game that made the "melting pot" fairly scintillate!

There was also an improvised shooting gallery, in

which Glenn Terry had a very difficult task in winning the prize from his father and Mr. Garrett.

"He couldn't have done it thirty years ago!" protested Mr. Garrett to his old friend.

"Not by a long shot!" ruled the judge.

And when the men rested an dsmoked in the shade of the tall elms and the conversation inevitably turned to the great war still raging in Europe, Mr. Garrett said to Judge Terry. "Gilbert, you must not expect me to abandon the day dreams I've indulged in during my exile. When we're all back in Denver, I shall still remain in touch with my Detroit hobby, the 'little Hague', and I shall agitate for radical political and economic reforms, without which wars will continue as frequent as ever.—I know 'tis unpopular to cry "peace" now, when there is no peace, when strife is in the very air and in our own blood and bones. The flower of the nations, the noblest hearts, the most generous souls, the most perfect men of our generation are on the great battlefields of the land, the sea and the air. They are where they should be—under the call of their governments. But to make that call unnecessary in th efuture, to that end let all of us apply whatever wisdom is given us. If many have lost faith, let us still have faith, if many have given up to the cry for blood, let us still listen to the voice of peace and amity. I have pondered some over the subject and have concluded: that as long as we have monopoly and exclusiveness in trade, science and art; as long as we have no better medium of universal understanding than our various languages, revel in the dead languages, and neglect learning even those

of our neighbors; as long as we cultivate race-pride; as long as we make fetishes of pedigree and perpetual land titles; as long as the word 'foreigner' suggests to us contempt and the right to exploit; as long as we have custom houses at every port; as long as we refuse to admit Christianity and a full application of the Golden Rule into our politics, our economics, our industries and our pleasures; so long do we create unstable equilibrium; so long will all peace conferences be farces; so long will we be obliged to manufacture cannons; and so long will history's chapters be but descriptions of battles and campaigns. But while mankind is still somewhat governed by the spirit of the ring-nosed, tattooed, tribally embattled heathen, let us not forget to handle a rifle, let us even be—good patriots and formidable soldiers!"

And the very conservative judge agreed entirely—with at least the last sentence.

Before Vera and Glenn left on their trip to Montana and Colorado, the guests gathered before the pavilion in the garden, and the chorus and orchestra from the "little Hague", under the leadership of their organizer and patron, still preferably called, among them, Mr. Pickett, gave one of their characteristic cosmopolitan concerts, including the medley of national airs and the "Hymn to Joy." The two lovers, with the thunder of the howitzers still in their memories and the happiness of Hymen and the vision of a peaceful future in their hearts, stepped in and played with them. The last number, the echoes of which rose high above the tops of the giant elms and out toward the stars of that clear May night, was the chorus

from Mendelssohn's "St. Paul":— "How lovely are the Messengers that preach to us the Gospel of Peace!"

THE END.

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